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ARMENIAN MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA



# ARMMA

NEWS



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# The Constant

***...whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.***

Matthew 25:40

By **Zaven Khanjian**, AMAA Executive Director/CEO

None of you, I suppose, have missed the major news headlines which have recently been the focus of attention at many kitchen tables of American families.

*Impeachment and Acquittal*

*Coronavirus*

*Climate Change*

*US Primaries and Presidential Elections*

and to a lesser degree

*Deal of the Century*

*An Unrestrained Turkey Salivating New Imperial Ambitions*

*Unrelenting Armed Conflict in the Near East*

*Popular Discord and Economic Chaos in Lebanon*

Emotions and positions like what we have currently witnessed have not been this radically polarized in American Society for quite a long time.

In fact, the schism within states and societies is not just confined to the United States of America. So much so that the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Antonio Guterres, recently warned that “A wind of madness is sweeping the globe.”

Tons of ink can flow in the process of validating, explaining, justifying, arguing and defending one view against the other. But it is sad to note that the defining line of these conflicts is the reign of egocentrism, power, greed and narcissism. For man defies the conception of the truth. As we read in scripture, 1 Peter 1:24

“...All men are like grass.

and all their glory is like the flowers of the field

the grass withers and the flowers fall,

but the word of the Lord stands forever.”

In its 101 years of history and service, the AMAA has banged the rock and maneuvered through the killing fields of the post Genocide Syrian desert, the great Depression, World War II, bountiful natural disasters around the globe, post-Soviet independent Armenia, the Artsakh liberation war and endless, truly endless wars in the Near East since the end of World War II. Wars that have rocked the foundation of our thriving post Genocide communities in Egypt, Cyprus, Iran, Syria, Iraq and Lebanon. Wars, armed conflicts and economic decadence the redemption from which seems to have shared the fate of those ‘waiting for Godot.’

Amidst all this unrest, hopelessness and confusion, the AMAA has maintained one basic ‘constant’, reflecting God’s love and putting faith into action for our brothers and sisters in need. “.....whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.” Matthew 25:40

Prior to the healing of wounds in Syria where rockets are still falling in the streets of Aleppo, while missile strikes intermittently continue in Iraq and Iran, a cry for help has once again come from Lebanon where UAECNE President Rev. Mgrdich Karagoezian has issued an ‘appeal for emergency support for the UAECNE ministries in these difficult times’ of increasing layoffs, hundreds of business closures, inflation and liquidity crunch.

AMAA’s ‘constant’ is in full motion. In faith, we answer the clear call for *spiritual nourishment, educational support, physical sustenance, health care, social and cultural programs and provisions*. The ‘constant’ is in the AMAA’s ability to retain a cup that never overflows. We have and shall continue to respond to the emergency appeal for support by the UAECNE and ask for your help in bringing stability to and injecting hope in our communities in the Near East.

Thank you for your support in shoring AMAA’s ‘constant’ yesterday, today and tomorrow. ☐







# Armenian Presbyterian Church of Yettem

From Yettem, California to Stepanavan, Armenia

‘...this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached’ and ‘no 17 year old youth will be left behind’

## *Legacy of a Vision Realized*

By Elise Kalfayan

A century ago, Armenian Evangelical immigrants were establishing orchards, businesses and churches in the San Joaquin Valley of California. Children they brought to their Sunday Schools, including AMAA supporters and philanthropists Ken Khachigian and Luther Khachigian, grew and flourished in

these new settings. The former Armenian Evangelical Church of Yettem, which existed in a corner of the Valley from 1909 to the early 1970s, served a small congregation but had a tremendous influence on the life and faith of Armenian Evangelicals who cherished their founders’ vision. The Khachigians and others, legacies of these churches and their founders’ visions, con-

tinue to demonstrate its impact with their gifts of faith and love.

The AMAA salutes this former church and its pastors and church body as it receives support for its mission from first-, second-, and subsequent generations of Armenian Americans throughout California. We thank God for those who built and sustained Armenian Evangelical church life in these com-



munities and return their love by publishing the memories of descendants along with the following short history.

Armenian Evangelical churches were established on the East Coast of the United States before 1900, while a network of families was growing around Fresno in central California. Leading Armenian Evangelical pastors envisioned a church serving immigrants in a farming community southeast of Fresno.

Rev. Harutune Jenanyan and Rev. Hovhannes Haygooni each worked to establish the church and community in Yettem. Rev. Jenanyan, a Christian leader in Philadelphia, was serving as Moderator of the Armenian Evangelical Union of Eastern States in 1903 when he traveled across the country and purchased land in Tulare County, naming it Yettem. At the time, Rev. Haygooni was Pastor of the First Armenian Presbyterian Church of Fresno and he encouraged the settlers of Yettem to form a Presbyterian Church. They began by meeting for Sunday services under a large fig tree in 1909.

Armenian Evangelicals instrumental in lay leadership of the new Church were Tateos Davidian, Jack Hamalian, Eliazar Kendigian and Moses Jenanyan, who were also the first elders of the Church. The first Pastor of the Church after it was built was Rev. Melkon Jenanyan, who was called to service from the East Coast by his brother Rev. Harutune Jenanyan.

The Church was organized in April 1911, its cornerstone was laid a month later, and the building was completed in 1912. Most of the labor was donated by members of the congregation. In a short time, Ezras Tellalian established a Christian Endeavor group with 30 members, a Ladies Aid group began with 15 members, the congregation built a manse, and they raised money to purchase the Church's first piano.

The Armenian Presbyterian Church of Yettem served the local community, who commuted from Visalia, Dinuba and other towns several miles away. Ken and Luther Khachigian grew up in Visalia, and Ken remembers his parents driving the family 15 miles each Sunday to get to the Church.

Rev. K. Minasian preached at the Church without a salary during the Great Depression. He was succeeded in 1932 by Rev. Arpiar Vartanian, who held the community and church together as some families had to move away during the economic troubles of the Depression. A belfry and steeple roof of the Church were put in, along with a lighted

cross, while he ministered there. In 1948, Rev. Samuel Rejebian, originally from Hadjin and trained at the Theological Seminary of Marash, assumed the pastorate. During his ministry, English became the dominant language of the Church, and he organized the young adults' group, and began publishing a Church newsletter.

As Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian notes, "Rev. Rejebian had a remarkable career and leadership among the Armenian Evangelical unions on the East and West Coasts. He had been Moderator of both the Armenian Evangelical Union of Eastern States and the Armenian Evangelical Union of California. He also served on the Board of Directors of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA); from 1947-1948 he served as its President."

Rev. Rejebian led the Church in a building fund campaign after the original sanctuary was tragically destroyed by a fire in March 1955. Church services were held at the Yettem schoolhouse while \$35,000 was raised by the Campaign Committee which included Ezras Tellalian (Chair), Aram Iskenderian (Co-Chair), Charles Davidian of Los Angeles, and Sam Yenovkian of Sacramento. Building Committee members were Carl Kasparian (Chair), Richard Hachigian and Edward Tellalian. A new, larger church sanctuary was completed and dedicated in April 1956.

In the fall of 1956, the Armenian Evangelical Union of California's annual retreat was held in Yettem. They must have celebrated the re-built church and reflected on the legacy of their Armenian Evangelical faith. Rev. Dr. Hagop Chakmakjian, who had served as Pastor of Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church in Fresno for many years and for a time as Pastor at the Armenian Presbyterian Church of Yettem, spoke at that gathering on "The Armenian Evangelical Church and the Armenian People," saying, *"the Evangelicals have the calling of being apostles of everyday Christian life. The Gospel teaches us that Christ's demands do not end with Sunday worship but that they must be lived every day and every hour in all spheres and areas of life - at home, work-shop, school, recreation, and in national as well as political life."*

In November 1962, the Church celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, honoring long-time leaders. Rev. Arsham Yeramian and Rev. Hagop Janbazian served as the Church's pastors for three years each. During the Church's active years, the Ladies Aid

was a great support, and their project raised funds for the AMAA, the Danish Birds' Nest Orphanage, and the Blind People's Home in Beirut, Lebanon. After the Janbazians were called to serve in Anjar, Lebanon in 1971, the Church body decreased in number until it was no longer possible to continue having services, and the Church facilities were turned over to the Presbytery.

"My grandfather was our original connection to the Church," says Ken Khachigian. "He arrived in California in 1910. When my father got married, he knew it was his responsibility to raise his family in the church. I and all my brothers were baptized in that Church. Our mother had been raised in the Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church in Fresno, and every so often we would go to services there. Pilgrim was a huge Church compared to ours."

"I was baptized by Rev. Apiar Vartanian, and all of us were given Armenian baptismal names. Mine was Khazar, after my grandfather. My baptismal certificate was recorded in the Yettem Church records." Elizabeth Kizirian Khachigian was "Clerk of the Session" – a Presbyterian denominational post – and a strong lay leader of the Church. Her diligent record-keeping of session minutes, marriages, baptisms, and church events exist to this day in the Presbytery's archives in Philadelphia.

"My mother Elizabeth was the first child of Khazar and Nartui (Avakian) Kizirian born in 1911 in Fresno," notes Luther Khachigian. "So, she was one of the first American citizens of that group of Armenians. Her parents were among the earliest members of Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church. I believe Rev. Vartanian baptized my mother and her siblings. She graduated from Clovis High School and was going to go on to become a teacher, but the Depression made that impossible and she had to get a job in a fruit packing plant instead."

Luther also remembers that his father had to work incredibly hard to establish himself and he lost his father at the age of 17. "I solidly believe in the AMAA and its humanitarian outreach because of my father's suffering in his youth and how much the church helped him. The Armenian church was the home of so many when they were homeless." Both men recall their parents as strong examples of service. Ken says, "They got involved in the church and the AMAA. My parents' influence is more obvious to me now later in life. Even though

they didn't have a lot of money to give, they consistently gave back. My parents used the term 'parikortzigan' (good works) often as they talked about their support for AMAA."

Ken and Luther recall church life and their participation in church events. "The church service was bilingual. Bibles and Hymnals were in Armenian and English. There wasn't usually a Sunday School because there were very few kids. It was a very informal church and on one occasion I remember the badveli telling one of the little boys from the pulpit, 'Robert, you need to behave and sit still!'"

"The men were often tired, as it was a long week. Everybody sat in the same place; we had our pew and across from us was Baron Ezras Tellalian, the pillar of the church. People would come from Dinuba, from Reedly, and Visalia was about as far as anybody would come. It was a 30-minute drive for us. Almost all of our congregation and people in Yettem were originally from Chomaklou, and every summer we would go to a big Chomakloutzi picnic which drew families from all over the state – from Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco – they flocked to Visalia for a very nice picnic!"

"Our church had a basement which was the social hall, and that's where we would have gatherings, meetings, and a little Sunday School. My older cousin taught Sunday School for a while. The four of us Khachigian boys all performed in the Church: my oldest brother Melvin played the piano, Luther and Ronnie played trombone and trumpet, and I also played the trumpet. I know one Easter Sunday I played 'Christ Arose' on the trumpet and was very nervous!"

The pastors who served in Yettem through most of its existence were originally from Cilicia, but had obtained their education in the U.S. Some had established successful businesses and had extensive ecumenical contacts, making their commitment to a small, rural congregation in California even more impressive.

"All the pastors who came to serve at the Church were very learned, educated men," remembers Ken, and his impression is shared by Luther, their cousin Pat Aharonian, and their good friend Bruce Tatarian. "They were all very pious and very intelligent and we respected them a great deal."

Pat Aharonian, who grew up in Dinuba, was baptized by Rev. Vartanian and grew up in the Church. "I remember going to Christian Endeavor meetings and seeing

my cousins and other family members at Church. We loved the hymns, those stay with us of course, and I probably will not ever forget Rev. Vartanian and his wife, in fact all of the pastors and their wives, they were people to look up to and try to emulate!"

Bruce Tatarian also grew up in Dinuba and remembers Rev. Rejebian and Rev. Chakmakjian. "The Church was about halfway to Visalia. It was my grandparents' Church and became my parents' Church even though my mother was Apostolic. My grandfather was an elder for several years. We had a lot of activities, often centered around food.

"Ken's father and his family put so much time and work into that Church. I remember Rev. Rejebian, who graduated from Harvard. He was always a gentleman, meticulously dressed, and his wife was identical, just the nicest lady. When he retired, he purchased a home across the street from my grandparents in Dinuba. So, I got to see them even after they retired, and I remember that they taught one of my female friends, who lived next door to them, to cook delicious Armenian food.

"I was close to Richie Hachigan (one of the Khachigians' cousins) because we went to school together, and we connected again in Southern California coincidentally. We stay in touch with Ken and some others from the Church. While I was an officer at Beckman Instruments, I was recruited to help start a branch of Junior Achievement for Armenia. And when Armenia became a country again, we recognized a need and are

now helping thousands of children there."

Ken Khachigian went on to become a noted political consultant, attorney and speechwriter. He was a longtime aide to President Richard Nixon and chief speechwriter to President Ronald Reagan. He has been an AMAA benefactor for years and was recently honored by the Armenian American Museum project for his lifetime of service to the Armenian community. Luther Khachigian became a successful Central Valley businessman and together with Ken established the John and Elizabeth Khachigian Memorial Fund held at the AMAA to support orphans, because of the struggle their father had in establishing himself after his own father died. Both Kenneth and Luther continue to contribute to the Fund in memory of their parents. Luther also funded the John Ohannes Khachigian Armenian Eye Care Project clinic in Gyumri, Armenia and other AECF projects.

The Armenian Evangelical Church of Yettem was the birthplace of Christian commitment for the Khachigians, their families and friends. The Church nourished the faith and fellowship of its members for decades while connecting them to the Armenian Evangelical community and the AMAA. While the Church no longer exists, its legacy remains strong, and has touched Armenian Evangelicals across California, the country and the world. □

*(See a group photo of Yettem Church Congregation on the back cover)*



**John Onnig Khachigian, top row left, with the elders of Yettem Church. Rev. Samuel Rejebian is pictured in a black suit, in front row center.**



# Evangelical Church of Armenia Stepanavan

## Construction Progress, Utilization and Future Ministries

**T**he Armenian Missionary Association of America's (AMAA) involvement in the area of Stepanavan has been active since 1992, when Vanadzor ECA Representative Rev. Samvel Kirakosyan, together with his wife Narine, set up a temporary chapel and started attracting new churchgoers.

This ministry grew over time and in 1999, a new church building was inaugurated,

which is still in place and used today. The work focused on needy families and child sponsorship at first, and then soon grew into other fields such as Christian education, after school daycare, a soup kitchen and others. Most of these ministries were carried out in the church and at an adjacent building, which acted as an office, and gathering space. However, as needs grew, and the outreach expanded, this building became an increasingly inadequate space to hold

these activities and accommodate real development. Furthermore, this building had structural problems which made it unfit for any remodeling or restoration work.

The need for a new building project has been persistently growing for the past 10 years. In 2018, the decision was made to proceed with the construction of a new building in 2019. The decision involved the demolition of the old building to make room for a new office building to be



constructed on the vacated land adjacent to the church.

Today AMAA-Armenia's largest construction project is in the city of Stepanavan. The new project was kicked-off in mid-2019 under the supervision of AMAA Board member Hratch Sarkis, and the contractors have since picked up pace to finish all structural and skeletal works, along with all inner divisions. The basement, ground and first floors are all completed in the concrete phase. Provisions for windows, doors and ceilings are now in movement, as the focus will soon be shifted toward finishing works. This last phase will likely take up to 10-12 months to produce the expected outcomes.

The new building consists of three floors: An underground basement level, which includes a dance classroom, a meeting room, a staff lounge, storage and technical rooms. A ground floor which includes a Christian Education office, two managerial offices, two small conference rooms, a kitchen and a dining hall for 50 people. And a first floor, which includes three large, study rooms and computer classrooms, offices for social workers and psychologists, and a two-bedroom apartment.

The Center will include the local AMAA offices through which various services are provided. The Christian Education office will cater to the church's ministry activities through classrooms and an outdoor sports facility. The top floor also holds a parsonage for Stepanavan's local pastor. Finally, the Center will give birth to Stepanavan's very own "Shogh" educational day center, which will be the sixth such Center in all Armenia and Artsakh. The AMAA had always wanted to expand the "Shogh" Center's outreach



*The soccer team of Stepanavan Church.*



*Children enjoy a painting class at Stepanavan Church.*

ever since it started producing astounding results in Yerevan, Gyumri, Vanadzor, Askeran and Shushi, and now the conviction

is that this ministry will be carried out to Stepanavan to bring true change to people's lives. □



*The old Christian Education Center of the Stepanavan Church, now demolished.*



*The future Christian Education Center of the Stepanavan Church, currently under construction.*

# The Church in Mission

*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the world."*

**Acts 1:8**

By **Rev. Dr. Krikor Youmshajekian\***



If we want to be missional churches and organizations with a clear vision, we should be continually considering the vitally important questions: “*Why are we here?*” and “*What is our mission?*” Sometimes churches misunderstand their task and instead of engaging in a vital mission, they change to a survival mode.

The Commission on Mission of the National Council of Churches in Australia has adopted the following statement about the nature of the mission in 1997:

*Mission is the creating, reconciling and transforming action of God, flowing from the community of love found in the Trinity, made known to all humanity in the person of Jesus, and entrusted to the faithful action and witness of the people of God.*

This statement expresses the conviction that Mission is the mission of God – the *missio Dei*. It is God’s mission which defines the church and not that the church generates mission. In other words, we should not say: “*The church has a mission*”, but rather “*The mission has a church*.” The church’s existence is deeply rooted in the mission of God and the church is the primary agent of the mission of God, which flows from the Trinitarian God to the people of God, which originates in the relatedness of the communal Godhead and reaches out to create and restore relationships with and within all creations.

The New Testament concept of community “*koinonia*” defines the Christian Church as all those who have Christ and His mission in common. The idea “*spreading the Good News*” is fundamental to the whole range of Christian traditions. God’s call is to all people (*laos*) of God and is called to be a Christ-like, making her highest priority to bring people to a vital relationship with Christ. The distinctive characteristics, calling and mission are the Proclamation of the Good News, Worship, Fellowship, Witness and Service.

Jesus empowered His followers, to preach, teach, heal and form a new community, an apostolate to go out and serve those who are in need, striving to treat people on equal basis, seeking to give a voice to the poor and the outcast. The task of the local congregation is to help ordinary people become engaged in that mystery and live that faith in the world and be engaged in the mission.

The book of Acts is the story of those women and men, who took seriously the command of the Lord and begun to spread the Good News of His Resurrection. It presents the birth and the expansion of the church of Jesus Christ. But what was the essential reason for the success of the mission of the church? It is important to know how it was possible to bring the Good News of the Gospel to many people. How the church registered growth in its membership?

First. **They prayed.** In Luke we often read the following words; “*They prayed*” and “*When they were praying*.” It is clear that the first church was a praying church. They prayed for their needs and for the needs of others; they prayed for their leaders, the poor, the needy, and the sick and for their enemies. They always prayed and everywhere; alone and in small and large groups. Prayed persistently and tirelessly for their leaders, the weak and the needy, and for their own strength.

Second. **Prayer brought unity and harmony.** All the believers were gathered in one place. They prayed collectively. It is not possible to believe and not pray collectively and in unity. The unity of the church should not be based on the preacher, the elders, the programs or the buildings. They come and go. If the church believes, prays, teaches and preaches that Jesus is the Christ, it will certainly succeed in its mission.

Third. **Unity gives result.** Luke writes: “*Day by day the Lord added to their number those who were saved*” (Acts 2:47). It will be easy to say that their numbers were multiplied because of Peter’s sermon. If this is our conviction, then God could be so far from us. We can have very good programs, big groups, excellent facilities, volunteers and organizers; which are essential and important. But they are not what we need. We need prayer and unity. The church prayed, grew and prospered.

The praying church unites, grows and fills with the fear of God. This is the secret of the triumph of the church. Let us be a vital church with a clear vision for mission and ministry. Only then we will be a *Church in Mission* or the *Church of the Mission*. □

\*Rev. Dr. Krikor Youmshajekian is the President of the Armenian Missionary Association of Australia





# The Holy Trinity Armenian Evangelical Congregational Church of Buenos Aires Commemorates 90 Years of Faithful Service in Argentina

**T**he total population of the Argentine Republic is estimated to be 42 million people. There is democracy and freedom of religion in the country. The Evangelical Church has grown much in recent decades and currently approximately 10% of the population are evangelicals.

The Armenian community in Argentina is about 150,000 people. About 80% of them reside in Buenos Aires and the surrounding area, with approximately 2,500 families of Evangelical origin.

The activities of The Holy Trinity Armenian Evangelical Congregational Church of Buenos were initiated before 1925 by a group of Armenian Evangelicals who fled the massacres of the Armenian Genocide and settled in Argentina. They held meetings in houses where men and women of all ages congregated with their children to receive biblical instruction. Later in 1929 they came together to form the Church of Buenos Aires.

The nine stages of the evolution of the Ministerial Work of the Church and the objectives and plans developed are summarized in nine stages of 10 years each: 1929-1939 Foundational and Definition of objectives; 1939-1949 Consolidation and Purchase of the Temple; 1949-1959 Numerical growth and Revival; 1959-1969 Organization and Development; 1969-1979 Training of Leaders and Growth; 1979-1989 Intensive Evangelization; 1989-1999 Discipleship and Extension Works; 1999-2009 Tests and Revitalization of the Church; 2009-2019 Outreach to Armenian Immigrants and to the Neighborhood.



*Rev. Ara Mkhitarian (holding child) and Rev. Jorge Soncini dedicate a child during Sunday Worship Service.*

Over the years, 19 Pastors have served the Buenos Aires Church and faithfully fulfilled what the ministry entrusted to them by the Lord and blessed the Church with the proclamation of His Word with the testimony of their lives. Haig Adadurian (1929); Abraham H. Harutunian (1930-31); Mihran Balian (1935-45); Yervant Bogozian (Dr. Paul) (1946); Nazareth Salibian and Agop Djimondjian (1945-52); Jean Avedis Zarifian (1952-62); Vahram Tatikian (1957); Hovsep Mousayan (Collaborated between 1963-69); Jacobo Vartanian (1968-71); Samuel Bakalian - several months as a guest (1969 and 1974); José Balian (1975-92) with Co-Pastors: Enoc Elmassian (1975-85) and Rubén Kassabian (1985-92); Rubén Kassabian (1993-98); Enoc Elmassian (1996-2005); Guillermo Di Giovanna (1999-2003); Roberto Góngora (2004-14) and David Casaretto (2009-11). Since 2015 Jorge Soncini and Ara Mkhitarian are serving the Church.

Shortly before returning to the country where he lived, Rev. Mihran Balian proposed in a meeting with the Board of Directors, the approval to carry out an Act of Faith: Leave a Legacy to future generations. They prepared and buried several items in a lead bucket under the pulpit to be opened 50 years later. In 1995, Rev. Rubén Kassabian, who was the Pastor at the time, along with the congregation, which included some who had participated in this act 50 years ago, started the search of the buried lead bucket. Finally, they found the it in the front part of the pulpit. Items in the box were:



*Historical 1945 Church congregation photo found in buried lead box after 50 years.*



two Bibles, one in the Armenian language, and the other in Turkish language, 6 complete messages (sermons) preached in the Church by Rev. Mihran Balian, banknotes from the time, a list of members who had collaborated for the purchase of the Church building, the inauguration ribbon, the scissors with which it was cut and a group photo (see the black and white photo).

Sunday morning and evening worship services are held both in Spanish and Armenian languages. Besides the Sunday services the church holds different ministerial programs such as Bible study groups, Sunday School, Adolescent and Youth ministry, pastoral counseling, Armenian and Spanish language classes, music classes, Women's ministry, men's ministry, seniors' ministry, camp programs, outreach to immigrants from Armenia, etc.

AMAA continues its support to this vital Church in South America. During the last few years, AMAA has supported the education of its Pastor Rev. Ara Mkhitarian and helped with the much needed renovations in the Church and at the Monte Grande 'Weekend Cottage' camp site. In 2016 AMAA funded the installation of a hydraulic lift in the three floor church building and the renovation of sports sector, child-care, dressing rooms, bathrooms and the pulpit. In order to better serve the immigrant families, work with the children, teenagers and youth and teach them the Word of God and to organize summer camp with the brothers in Brazil and Uruguay and to serve the wider Argentinian community, AMAA



Buenos Aires Church Women's Meeting.



Outreach ministry to immigrants from Armenia.



Youth Group of Buenos Aires Church.



Sunday School children of Buenos Aires Church.



The Youth of Buenos Aires Church at Camp Monte Verde.

is currently funding further renovations in the Church building and Monte Grande camp site.

At the conclusion of his writing, Eduardo Armen Hajetian says: "The Legacy received from God and the generations that preceded us, calls us despite the circumstances, to live and maintain the values of our faith, to know and apply biblical principles, be examples before the world around us, faithfully obey the Lord and be examples of a life of holiness that inspires those around us to love and follow Christ. After 90 years, those of us who inherited the Legacy left to us are part of this faith story and we yearn with all our heart that many more may come to the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." □

(Compiled and adapted by Louisa Janbazian from the Church History, originally written in Spanish by Eduardo Armen Hajetian for the 90th Anniversary Celebrations of the Church)





# APPEAL FROM THE UNION OF THE ARMENIAN EVANGELICAL CHURCHES IN THE NEAR EAST

January 30, 2020

## To Our Partners in Ministry Throughout the World:

### Blessings in Christ to the whole world in this New Year.

In our previous correspondence we endeavored to describe the human toll the situation here in Lebanon is exacting. In the intervening weeks since, and despite the appointment of a new cabinet, its effects have gotten even more severe, not only because of domestic issues, but also because of the flare-up of regional tensions. It also should be stated that before the protests began in mid-October, Lebanon was already facing upwards of 35% unemployment; the protests merely uncovered the endemic mismanagement and corruption in the country since the end of the civil war in 1990.

For the coming decade, some economists foresee Lebanon facing something akin to the Great Depression, and the instability in the banking sector and the decreasing value of the local currency make for an even more volatile situation in the country. The struggling middle- and lower-class citizens of Lebanon are the ones having the greatest difficulty. In recent months an increasing number of workers are being let go from their jobs, while some of those who remain employed are receiving only half of their salaries. Hundreds of small and large businesses have closed in the same time period, and hardly a day goes by without the news of yet another established business shutting down. Meanwhile, the cost of goods has jumped higher, with a 30-50% increase in the cost of groceries in the last 4 months. All of this means that the working class is focused on having food to eat, and not on paying things such as school tuition.

Despite assurances of long-range viability for Lebanon from its financial and political elite, the UAECNE is anticipating a difficult road ahead in the immediate-to-mid-range future. To that end, we wish to present some detailed information depicting the challenges facing the various ministries of the Union:

1. **Our churches in Lebanon** – The six Union churches continue their vital ministry to their members and the community, relying largely on unpaid volunteers. For example, aside from the students the Union serves in Armenian Evangelical schools, a minimum of 350 children, youth and young adults are served in total through these churches. Women's and other ministries are also a crucial part of what the local church does. Currently all churches have canceled their traditional fund-raising activities (such as banquets and other events) due to the current political/economic crisis. The membership pledges and Sunday offerings at this point appear to be on average about 60% of what members' giving was in 2019.
2. **Our schools in Lebanon** – The impact of the situation in Lebanon on the Union's educational outreach (along with Haigazian University, which faces the same challenges as the Union's schools) is seen in the non-payment of tuition (already at a low, prior to the protests) by an increasing number of families and parents' withdrawal of their children to place them in the free but academically-weak public school system. The effect this will have on every aspect of the entire Armenian community of Lebanon is formidable. To give an idea of the current situation of the schools' tuition income, halfway through the school year, the schools have only been able to collect anywhere from 52% to as low as 11% of tuition owed (after discounting, on average, one third of the actual cost) from parents. That is only \$448,000 out of the needed \$2,112,000. We have a detailed breakdown prepared, which we can send at your request.  
Alongside of these direct needs, there is the work of the Boarding Department in Anjar. Once directed by European partners, it is now fully a UAECNE ministry. In tandem with the Secondary School in Anjar, this Department cares for both boys and girls coming from at-risk home environments. And, maintaining the necessary income to continue this unique ministry is proving to be increasingly problematic.
3. **Our social work in Lebanon** – The outreach directly done by the Union's Social Action Committee in years past has focused on some assistance to needy families known to the churches. In the past few years, all Armenian social service agencies have been coordinating their efforts in order to provide more comprehensive service and avoid duplications. Now the challenges and needs have doubled and tripled, with the aforementioned unemployment or underemployment turning lower middle-class families into needy families. To provide some context, we were expending an average of \$70,000 per year to support displaced Syrian families in Lebanon. Alongside this, well before the current crisis, we were assisting Lebanese families for medical, housing, emergencies and other needs in the amount of \$60,000. Now, things are much worse and the needs much greater.
4. **Our institutions and organizations in Lebanon** – The Union's various programs and organizations have been trying to adjust to this "new normal," in which the capacity of those being served to contribute to the operations of these organizations is rapidly diminishing. The ability of people to pay their fees for the work of the Union's tribunal is also being affected. This situation extends also to the Christian Endeavor youth ministries, to outside rentals of KCHAG center, to the Union's Publications Committee, and to the Union's contributions to the jointly-owned institutions or ecumenical partnerships such as the Home for the Elderly (CAHL), the Armenian Sanatorium, the Near East School of Theology and the like.

Therefore, we appeal to you for emergency support for the UAECNE ministries in these difficult times in Lebanon. Considering all of the above, two areas are the most critical:

- The first is the #2 challenge, special support for schools. This is essential to counter the large amounts of unpaid tuitions that are accumulating.
- The second is the #3 challenge, social work. We will need to double the amount being expended for the burgeoning needs among the growing numbers of Lebanese poor. This means that at least another \$60,000 will be required to meet some very basic needs of the families that are under our care or who will approach us in the near future.

Clearly, we are in days of deep discouragement and uncertainty in Lebanon. The concern is etched on people's faces wherever one turns, and they are often given to hopelessness and despair, reminding us of the urgency of the church's ministry in this world. Our hope remains therefore on the unshakeable foundation, Jesus Christ. We are thankful that God enables us to walk through this valley with our eyes fixed on His light and truth, as we redouble our commitment to be the Lord's witnesses in this time and place.

**Yours in Christ's Service,  
Rev. Mgrdich Karagoezian, UAECNE President**



# Hope For the Future

By Rev. Haroutune Selimian, President of the Armenian Evangelical Protestant Community in Syria

**T**here is no doubt that the way the political situation in the Middle East develops is of utmost concern to the Armenian people everywhere. The future of the whole Armenian Nation in the Middle East is dependent upon this situation.

Aleppo was the birthplace of our Armenian Nation at the end of the dreadful Armenian Genocide of 1915. This is the city where grandmothers and orphans in their misery built a nation of people that overcame all challenges and created a civilization where the Church was the center. Where there was a church there was also a school and where there was a school there were also cultural activities. The Armenians of Aleppo showed the rest of the world that the Armenian Genocide was not the end. They proved that "... unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."

## SYRIA OVERVIEW

As the Syria crisis enters its ninth year, the scale, severity and complexity of humanitarian needs remain extensive. This is the result of continued hostilities in localized areas, new and protracted displacement, increased spontaneous returns and the sustained erosion of communities' resilience during more than eight years of crisis. Syria is still one of the biggest and most complex

crises globally, and it is far from being over.

Across Syria, an estimated 11.7 million people need humanitarian assistance. While there has been a reduction in violence in many parts of the country over the past year, the impact of present and past hostilities on civilians remains the principal driver of humanitarian needs in Syria.

The widespread destruction of civilian infrastructure, depleted savings and limited economic opportunities have forced many to resort to harmful coping strategies. The result is extreme vulnerability. Those particularly at risk are children, pregnant and lactating women, people with disabilities, and the elderly and other groups or individuals with specific needs or diminished coping mechanisms.

Last year saw a 16% increase in the number of displaced people in last resorts sites and more than 8 in 10 people in Syria living below the poverty line. People's coping mechanisms are depleted, and families are faced with hard choices to put food on the table, a roof over their heads, keeping their kids warm or sending them to school.

In addition to its horrific death toll, Syria's long civil war has caused the near collapse of economic output. Syria's economy has deeply deteriorated amid the ongoing conflict that began in 2011, declining by more than 80% from 2010 to 2019. Rampant inflation is making life impos-

sibly expensive. People are tired of war and just want to live a normal life.

A financial crisis in Lebanon has hit the economy of neighboring Syria hard, choking off a vital source of dollars and dragging the Syrian pound to record lows. Shut out of the global financial system by Western sanctions, Syria's economy has depended on banking ties to Lebanon to keep business and commerce running during the country's more than eight-year-old war.

## CURRENT SITUATION OF THE ARMENIAN EVANGELICAL COMMUNITY IN SYRIA

Praise be the Lord for He continued to lead us forward in His service. In 2019, with the Lord's blessing and grace, the Armenian Evangelical Church in Syria continued its mission by growing in Christian fellowship and service, especially under the terrible circumstances ruling in Syria as a result of the ongoing war. Despite the perils of war and its dire influence on our safety, schooling, economic, social and ecclesial life, the Armenian Evangelical Church has made it a priority to sustain those who decided to stay in Syria, under the leadership of Rev. Haroutune Selimian, President of the Armenian Evangelical Community in Syria, along with the managing and social structures, and the ministerial committees of the community. The Armenian Evangelical Church in Syria, along with other humanitarian, social and cultural programs



*First day of the School year at the Armenian Evangelical Bethel High School.*



*Children at the Armenian Evangelical Church of Kessab.*

continued services and worships. During the past year our churches kept their doors open to fellow worshippers and besides their regular Sunday worship services, held special services on Christmas, Easter, Palm Sunday and other occasions, which were followed by formal and social receptions.

The Armenian Evangelical Community was never spared the social activities and all the fun and leisure people could find under our umbrella. In addition to Christmas, Mother's Day, Easter celebrations, leadership and teachers training seminars for Armenian Evangelical schools' teachers, Sunday School, youth and Junior group leaders, Juniors retreat, and the Armenian Evangelical Churches' family retreat many other gatherings and kermes were organized by the Church.

As in previous years, this year the Daily Vacation Bible Schools were held at our churches in Aleppo and Kessab during the summer and were attended by over 365 children ages 4 to 12.

The Armenian Evangelical Church in Syria continued to provide social services and relief programs. Besides the financial aid for families and students on various occasions, food and clothing coupons, kids' program, winter fuel allowance and blanket distribution, Christmas and Easter aid were provided. The "Bethel Polyclinic" distributed medication and provided healthcare to more than 21,000 patients since its establishment. Today, the Bethel Polyclinic has become an advanced health center that is capable of handling more than 12 specialties delivered to patients by healthcare professionals recognized for their excellence at medical assistance. The Church kept extending financial assistance

for medical surgeries and hospital expenses to those in immediate need as well.

We also continued our social services through awareness lectures and special fairs, to enable women and give them the opportunity to sell their handmade goods.

Considering the psychological damages done to people during the war, and the high unemployment rate along with the increasing inflationary pressure in Syria, we felt the need to expand our services and provide the community with self-development and skills' programs. Thus, the Armenian Protestant Community in Syria launched a project of "vocational training and rehabilitation" for the second time.

In addition to the churches, schools in our community continued delivering quality education and preserved the educational level at its best. This year, we have accommodated 1,790 students in our schools. Our schools support the students, who are eager to learn as well as provide the students with more educational opportunities that will help their career development in the future. As a result of our successful educational model, it was easier for our students to score higher grades on national standardized tests "both on the Syrian Governmental Brevet & Baccalaureate Exams," which paved the way for their admission to credible universities in and outside of Syria. We proudly announce that three of our bright students, who participated in the Governmental final exams got first, third and tenth place in the ninth-grade certificate at their school and in Aleppo province.

It is still premature to call Syria a "post-conflict state." However, the restoration of the



*Rev. Haroutune Selimian visits the Armenian Orphanage of Aleppo.*



*Pharmacy at the Polyclinic of Aleppo, Syria.*

country, especially the Armenian Evangelical structures (schools, churches, medical center) could not be postponed and it was necessary to start with targeted measures to improve the quality of life and promote community development. The rehabilitation and reconstruction of people's homes, workplaces, churches and schools is considered a major step toward providing shelter and financial security for those thriving for a decent life and a better future. With the generous monetary donation of the Government of Hungary through "Hungary Helps" project, we have been able to renovate our five schools in Syria, the Armenian Evangelical Bethel Polyclinic, and the community playground on the campus of Aleppo College for girls. We have also started renovating the Bethel Church sanctuary, and the community Center on the campus of Bethel compound.

We believe that restoring our Christian institutions will create a more sustainable environment for our community.

Finally, we would like to express our sincere thanks to the Armenian Missionary Association of America for supporting the Armenian Evangelical Community in Syria and we promise that our people will continue to work and pray for peace and safety in Syria. Syria was in the past a beacon of light and we have great hopes that it will once more be one in the future as well with continuous co-existence, which has been one of the pillars of our nation. We, as the Armenian Community in Syria, will remain faithful and will keep our houses, churches, and organizations alive. □



# LEBANON SYRIA IRAQ IRAN



## YOUR GIFT THEIR RELIEF

**"We appeal to you for emergency support for the UAECNE ministries in these difficult times in Lebanon."**  
*Rev. Mgrdich Karagoezian, UAECNE President*

**I**nstability has been the course of the Middle East's modern history and by all accounts will remain so for the foreseeable future. Daily news reports illustrate harrowing days of unease throughout the region; rockets falling on the streets of **Aleppo**; increasing layoffs, hundreds of businesses closing, inflation, liquidity crunch are just some of the escalating effects of the economic crisis in **Lebanon**; missile strikes and demonstrations in **Iran and Iraq**. These and other ongoing tensions and prolonged conflict have increased pressures and daily struggles for regular citizens.

In the midst of this unrest, the AMAA remains a constant and will not forsake our brothers and sisters who live in the countries we serve -**Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Iran**. **AMAA will respond to the emergency appeal for support by the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East (UAECNE) and needs your help in bringing stability to our communities and people most affected.**

Yes, times are challenging but these challenges must not overwhelm any hope or solution that could be found. When you make a donation to the AMAA earmarked for Near East Relief, your gift will be put to use across the following areas:

**Nurture:** Support social and cultural programs that help nurture the children and provide a sense of normalcy.

**Education:** Provide a parent with the peace of mind that their child will continue receiving a quality education.

**Assistance:** Provide vital items such as food, water, blankets, clothing, and rent or business assistance.

**Repatriation:** Help families who wish to relocate to the Homeland to rebuild and restore their lives.

**Encouragement:** Be a catalyst of serving the vulnerable and upholding positive change.

**Access:** Provide much-needed patient support and access to medication.

**Spirituality:** Provide resources to witness the love of Christ and support local ministries and communities.

**Tuition:** Support students striving to complete their higher education despite interruptions and economic pressures.





## Meet Our Veteran Pastors

### Rev. Yessayi Sarmazian

By Rev. John Khanjian, Ph.D.

A person who is fortunate to be born at the foot of Mount Sildran in the beautiful hamlet of Baghjaghaz, Kessab, Syria is destined to go up or down!

Yessayi M. Sarmazian, born to Minas and Marie on May 22, 1937, began his journey up by first attending the village School and then walking up five Kilometers to the School in Ekiz-Olouk which was followed by walking 20 Kilometers to Kessab. Upon completion of his elementary education in 1951, he went to Beirut, Lebanon to continue his studies at the Armenian Evangelical Junior High School of Nor Marash, Bourj Hamoud (1951-53) and then at the Armenian Evangelical College (1953-55). In 1955 he again climbed up to Kessab to teach Armenian literature at the local Armenian Evangelical School. During this period, he received his calling to the ministry and went back to Beirut and enrolled at Haigazian College (now University) and the Near East School of Theology (1956-63) graduating with B.A. and B.D. degrees.

Upon his graduation, Rev. Sarmazian received a call to serve as Pastor of the Armenian Evangelical Bethel Church in Aleppo, Syria. This turned out to be a stiff climb for the novice who had to usher in peace and harmony among the Church members and convince the government's educational system to allow Armenian Schools to teach the Armenian language and music. His ministry included the invigoration of the junior and senior youth groups so much that he was given the title "Youth Pastor." He secured new lighting and benches for the church, a better basketball court, enrichment of the Library holdings, and was instrumental in building Rev. Aharon Shirajian Hall. While in Aleppo, he served on the Board of the Armenian Old Peoples Home.

In 1969 when he moved to Beirut to continue his theological education for a M.Div., he also served as a chaplain, teacher and Youth Minister at the Central High School, and chaired the Armenian Evangelical Schools Teacher's Union where he led tours to Istanbul, Bulgaria and Cyprus.

In 1973 he received a call to serve as Pastor of the Armenian Evangelical Emmanuel Church of Nor Amanos in the Dora district of Beirut. The Church attendance increased so much that the church hall had to be enlarged and the Youth group was so strong that it produced four ministerial candidates. The following year, Rev. Sarmazian was elected Moderator of the Denominational Council, a legal entity in Lebanon, held the position of Secretary of the Central Committee of the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches (UAECNE) in the Near East on a half time basis, volunteered to serve with Aram Sarkissian as the Chief Editors of the UAECNE's biweekly, *Chanasser* (1975-77), and was elected Vice Chair of the Board of Haigazian College. In the second half of 1970 the Lebanese Civil War ignited. As leader of all these committees he had his hands full taking care of the spiritual social, medical, nutritional and safety needs of the Armenian Community.

Rev. Hovhannes Karjian officially acknowledged his heroic role: "Rev. Sarmazian was a responsible and courageous Armenian. During the catastrophic events of Beirut while the bullets flew and bombs exploded, he ignored the threat of death and stayed on the wall, bravely fulfilling his pastoral duties by meeting the needs of his people."

When the war had relatively subsided, he accepted the call to serve as Pastor of the Toronto Armenian Evangelical Church from 1980-2004; this was his longest ministry, during which he was instrumental in purchasing, building, furnishing, and moving into the current church building. Being who he is, he could not just go into the sunset of retirement quietly. From 2009-13 he served as Pastor of the Armenian Brotherhood Church of Toronto and published two books in Armenian. He made 12 trips to serve in Armenia.

Rev. Sarmazian married Seza Proudian in 1967. God granted them three boys—Sevag, Saro and Sarmen and seven grandchildren. *Badveli's* last mountain to climb was the loss of his beloved Seza in 2019 to illness. She was a capable mother, wife, teacher and "yeretsgin." Blessed be her memory while Rev. Sarmazian's climb continues. □



At San Lazzaro Church - Zaven Khanjian, third from left, with Archbishop Khajag Barsamian and Archbishop Boghos Lévon Zékiyan next to him, Dr. Abraham Terian, far left and other participants at the Conference.

## AMAA Executive Director/CEO Zaven Khanjian Participates in Venice Conference - "Faith and Works"

**Z**aven Khanjian, AMAA Executive Director/CEO recently participated in a Conference entitled "Faith and Works" held in Venice, Italy under the auspices of the Mekhitarist Congregation and the Western European Patriarchal Delegation of the Armenian Apostolic Church. The Conference, held February 7-8, 2020 at the St. Lazarus Monastery, was initiated and organized by the **Mother of God Foundation** (Yerevan). [www.hg-meeting.org](http://www.hg-meeting.org)

A Press Release from the organizers identifying the purpose, participation and structure follows.

Mr. Khanjian summed up his experience at the Conference as follows.

"I am deeply touched and thankful for the invitation extended by Archbishop Boghos Lévon Zékiyan, spiritual leader of Turkey's Armenian Catholic Community and the Papal Legate of the Mekhitarist Order in Venice, and Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, former Primate of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America and current Pontifical Legate of the Western Europe, to participate in this Conference. The subject of the Conference is so near and dear to my personal life and to the mission of the AMAA. In

fact, it has been the *raison d'être* of the Association for the past 102 years. I came out of the Conference with a few laudable impressions.

"I commend the organizers' visionary choice of a most challenging subject generally impertinent to the masses and yet so vital and redeeming for the human race and our people.

"I applaud the exemplary planning and structure of the Conference, which gave way to the full participation and interaction of most, if not all the participants. With varied degrees, all participants were engaged in the discussions.





Vartan Karapetyan, President of the House of **Mother of God** Organization.



Session #3 "Faith Without Works Is Dead" -James 2:26.

"I was touched by the spirituality of all the participants and in particular the faithful youth representatives.

"The Conference uplifted my faith and reinstated my confidence that one day my people will not only pride themselves for being the

first nation to accept Christianity as their State religion, but also to pride themselves for being pioneers in living that faith every day.

"Finally, a word of appreciation to the President of the **Mother of God Foundation**, Vartan Karapetian, whose

exemplary leadership and organizational creativity was capped with the promise of next year's conference."

*What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? James 2:14*

## PRESS RELEASE

# Faith and Works Conference February 7-8, 2020 Saint Lazarus Island - Venice, Italy

*Faith without works is dead. James 2:26*

A Conference, entitled "Faith and Works," was held in Venice, Italy on February 7-8, 2020, under the auspices of the Mekhitarist Congregation and the Western European Patriarchal Delegation of the Armenian Apostolic Church. The Conference was initiated and organized by the Mother of God Foundation (Yerevan).

In the modern world, the expression of faith and exercising it is an almost impossible challenge. The purpose of this Conference was to form a crossroad of ideas, where through comprehensive discussions, the society is presented with a new vision of living and strengthening faith.

The theme of the Conference was entitled "Faith and Works," because faith in each person's life is strengthened and nourished by prayers, and it becomes tangible by works. The suggested location of the Conference was St. Lazarus Monastery, taking into consideration the centuries-old tradition of the latter's "faith-deed" concept, and the importance of making it sustainable and applicable today.

Representatives of various fields, including clergy, intellectuals, businessmen, as well as representatives of public and charitable organizations, participated in this Conference, and from their own experience presented examples to the issues raised.

The discussions were followed by four thematic sessions, each with its own coordinator, who presented a relevant topic and actively engaged the other participants in. It was proposed that the Venice Convention be held annually.

*(Translated from the original Armenian Press Release by Louisa Janbazian)*



# St. John Armenian Apostolic Church of San Diego, CA Holds Christmas Luncheon to Benefit the AMAA

St. John Garabed Armenian Apostolic Church of San Diego, CA held a festive Christmas Luncheon on December 22, 2019 which embraced the good work of the AMAA in Armenia, Artsakh and 22 other countries around the world. The Luncheon was hosted by Khoren and Kathy Kassardjian.

Very Rev. Fr. Pakrad Berjekian, St. John's Parish Priest, warmly welcomed the



**L to R:** Zaven Khanjian, Kathy Kassardjian, Rev. Fr. Pakrad Berjekian, Khoren Kassardjian and Sona Khanjian.

guests and AMAA's Executive Director/CEO Zaven Khanjian and his wife Sona, who had earlier attended the Christmas worship service-*badarak* at the Church. Following the AMAA Centennial video presentation, Mrs. Kassardjian introduced the AMAA Executive Director/CEO and invited him to speak about the AMAA's mission around the world and especially in Armenia and Artsakh. Parish attendees and guests generously made donations in support of AMAA activities and sponsored children in AMAA's Orphan and Child Care program.

AMAA Centennial gathering hosts Steve and Lisa Kradjian were also in attendance, as well as San Diegan Armenians with origins from Aleppo, Syria. Other guests traveled from Chicago, Philadelphia and different parts of the country. AMAA donors Dr. Renee



C. Lyons and her husband Jeff Kalibjian, who came from Northern California to meet Mr. Khanjian, were recognized.

During the Luncheon, guests were entertained by soloist Sona Baghdasaryan and Armenian Youth Singers. The AMAA thanks the Kassardjians for initiating, organizing and generously hosting this special Luncheon, as well as Rev. Fr. Berjekian and St. John Church for hosting the event. □



Upon the request of His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of the Holy Sea of Cilicia, the Armenian Missionary Association of Australia

## AMAA Supports Higher Education of Father Ardag of the Holy Sea of Cilicia

(AMA-Australia) has committed to provide the means and to fully sponsor a young cleric, Father Ardag (George Arabian) for his advanced theological training at Charles Sturt University's School of Theology, the United Theological College in Sydney. Fr. Ardag commenced his training in March 2019 and will graduate by the end of 2020 with a Master of Theology after writing his dissertation.

Education in general has illuminated the minds and souls of all the children of our nation without denominational, social or political discrimination. Being aware of the vital importance of education, it is the legacy of the Armenian Evangelical Church and the Church's missionary arm, the Armenian

Missionary Association of America (AMAA), which well identifies Armenian Evangelicals throughout their 173-year history, that seminary education is essential for those, who have the calling to serve God in particular. Moreover, beyond the dissemination of the Word of God, education brands the Armenian Missionary Association of America's global service.

The AMAA Board of Directors has approved to provide the whole tuition, which is 1/3 of the total cost of this project. AMA-Australia, with the support of the Australian Armenian Community, will cover the remaining 2/3, which includes all other expenses such as fees, accommodations, cost of living, books, travel and medical costs. □





## AMAA Shares the Joy of Christmas with over 11,000 Children Throughout Armenia and Artsakh

**T**he Armenian Missionary Association of America's Center on Baghramyan Street in Yerevan was crowded with children and their parents who gathered for special New Year's and Christmas Programs. The Programs were held on January 14 and 15, and took place four times each day. These Programs were not just visits from Santa Claus, cheerful songs, dances and Christmas presents. They also included the Christmas message which was conveyed from the stage: Share God's Love with One Another and Give Unselfish Joy to Others.

Through this year's Christmas play "Three Baskets," presented by AMAA-Armenia's "Hayasa" theatrical group, the young actors successfully brought Divine Love to the audience. In the play, written by Director/Screenwriter Nune Abrahamyan, school children tell about their cherished dreams on Christmas Eve and realize that even material dreams can come true if there is a desire and willingness to help others with an endless compassion. At the conclusion, the children hug each other and the most important Christmas message echoes: "Because I came that they might have life and have more." (John 10:10)

Before each presentation, the Evangelical Church of Armenia's Christian Education Director Rev. Avetik Khachatryan and AMAA-Armenia Representative Harout

Nercessian greeted the audience and welcomed them to the Program.

AMAA-Armenia and the Evangelical Church of Armenia jointly organized these festive Christmas and New Year's events in 45 towns and villages in Armenia and Artsakh. Over 11,000 children received not only Christmas Joy Packages and visits from Santa but heard about God's Divine Love to give unselfish joy to others.

We thank all our donors who supported our children in Armenia and Artsakh by donating to our Christmas Joy Program. □





# AMAA's Vanadzor "Shogh" Day Center Moves to New Location

Earlier this year, AMAA's "Shogh" Children's Day Center in Vanadzor, Armenia moved to its new location. The AMAA bought the building last year, renovated and furnished it as the new "Shogh" Center. The children, who attended the Center since 2013 when the Center first opened, cut the ribbon at the opening ceremony, held on February 4. The staff welcomed the children to the new Center with applause, smiles and exclaiming "Welcome to the Shogh Center."

Following the opening ceremony, the staff and families toured the Center where they were delighted to see the new furnishings in the classrooms.

In the new Center, the bee serves as a symbol of diligence, production and punctuality. The staff welcomed the children to the new Center with images of the bee family. The children were happy to learn that they were also members of that bee family. The many types of flowers in their imaginary fairy-tale garden had conventional names such as a flower of kindness, responsibility and care. They chose the flower nectar from which they will receive and bring their drop of honey into the Center, filling it with a symbolic honeycomb. Each made his/her own contribution by

saying: "A drop of righteousness, kindness, faithfulness ..." and they posted their bees on the wall as a promise to obey the Center's rules, each repeating, "I am the Shogh."

A reception held following the opening ceremony was also a reminder of a hive – organized work of bees, its efficiency and usefulness.

"Each AMAA Shogh Center is a bee hive where children are cared for, nurtured, educated and prepared to be productive citizens in society collectively contributing to structure a honeycomb state," said Zaven Khanjian, AMAA Executive Director/CEO.

AMAA's "Shogh" Day Centers, located in Gyumri, Vanadzor and Yerevan in Armenia and Askeran and Shushi in Artsakh, aim to support children 6-12 years old, who are living in socially underserved families. The main objective of the Centers is to help children overcome educational difficulties, grow personally, and become part of an educated and healthy society. Highly qualified and experienced professionals such as



tutors, social workers and psychologists provide social, educational, psychological, and recreational activities to nearly 290 school-age children. The "Shogh" Centers also provide for children's safety during parents' working hours preventing children's involvement in dangerous situations associated with accidents or violence. □

## "Stitched with Love" Celebrates Seven Years of Helping Newborns and Children

For the seventh year, AMAA's "Stitched with Love" Program, headed by Betty Cherkezian, is sending knitted and crocheted blankets, hats, scarves and gloves to newborn and young children in Armenia.

During 2019, AMAA sent 12 boxes and 8 sacks of knitted blankets, hats, gloves and other knitted items to Armenia. The gifts were distributed through the Aynilian Clinic in Yerevan and through local AMAA-Armenia centers in Vanadzor, Vartenis, Goris, Stepanavan and Artsakh.

On behalf of our beautiful children, we thank our volunteers for being a special part of the "Stitched with Love" family. We are grateful to all for their master craftsmanship, support and dedication to this ongoing and important mission. □





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# AMAA-Armenia Obtains Belarus Tractor For Navur Cooperative of Tavush Region of Armenia

**A**s part of the “One Village” Consortium, AMAA-Armenia was instrumental in obtaining a Belarus tractor for the Navur Village (Tavush Region) near the Azeri border in December 2019. The tractor, donated by the Director of North Hills LLC Arshavir Gevorgyan and benefactors George and Khachik Titizian of Los Angeles, CA, was a much-needed item for the community.

Mher Nikoyan, Director of the Cooperative, expressed his sincere gratitude to the AMAA and the North Hills LLC, as well as to the Titizians for this generous donation which will greatly help the Navur Community.

Established in 2014, the non-profit “Navur Community Agricultural Consumers

Cooperative,” which is governed by its members, provides low cost agricultural services to the community.

AMAA-Armenia is one of eleven organizations forming the Consortium: The Armenian Missionary Association of America-Armenia (AMAA-Armenia), “Shen: Charity NGO, Children of Armenia Fund (COAF), Development Principles NGO, Fund for Armenian Relief, World Vision Armenia, Teach For Armenia (TA), World Council of Churches Armenia Round Table



Foundation, Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU), Armenian Caritas Benevolent NGO and “Diaconia” Charitable Fund. □

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## "Going to Kirantz Village Was One of the Most Important Decisions of My Life" -Lida

**G**oing to Kirantz Village was one of the most important decisions of my life,” says Lida Mnatsakanyan. Lida who went to Kirantz, a border village in Tavush Region of Republic of Armenia as part of Consortium's "One Village" initiative for a two year Leadership Development Program of "Teach for Armenia" funded by AMAA, says she was wondering whether it was worth it to go or not. The desire to participate was great, but there were also fears of distance and conditions. Looking back, Lida says that this was one of the best decisions of her life, because communicating with the children and having the opportunity to work with them gave them a sense of being valued and doing meaningful work.

Lida, who teaches Russian language to the schoolchildren in the Kirants com-



munity, teaches them many other skills of initiative, courage, never giving up and leadership. Lida added that the enthusiasm of the children and the idea of providing them with better education doubled her strengths to live in the village, work and inspire the students. AMAA-Armenia is one of eleven organizations forming the Consortium, that reaches out to the border villages of Armenia. □



*Lida Mnatsakanyan (right) with some of her students in Kirantz Village.*

## UCLA Appoints Dr. Ann R. Karagozian Sarafian as Inaugural Director of Promise Armenian Institute

**T**he Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) has the distinct pleasure to share the news of its Board Member and Armenia Committee Chair Dr. Ann R. Karagozian Sarafian's appointment as Inaugural Director of the UCLA Promise Armenian Institute, which will include the new Armenian Studies Center. Dr. Karagozian will be involved in the selection of its first Director.

As stated in the official announcement by the UCLA International Institute "The Promise Armenian Institute is a groundbreaking new entity within the UCLA International Institute. The new Institute will be the hub for world-class research and teaching on Armenian Studies, and for coordinating new and ongoing research and public impact programs across UCLA, from social sciences to health sciences; from humanities to music, the arts and engineering; and from public policy to management. The Promise Armenian Institute's size, scope and interdisciplinary approach make it the first of its kind in the world."

Dr. Karagozian received her bachelor's degree in engineering from UCLA, graduating summa cum laude. She received her master's degree and doctorate from Caltech and joined the UCLA faculty in 1982. Dr. Karagozian currently is the head of UCLA's Energy and Propulsion Research Laboratory and the Director of the joint UCLA-Air Force Research Laboratory Collaborative Center for Aerospace Sciences. In 2018, she was elected to the U.S. National Academy of Engineering.

The AMAA extends its congratulations and good wishes to Dr. Ann Karagozian for a successful leadership role at the Promise Armenian Institute. □



YOU'RE INVITED TO

*Our Secret Garden*

If you will be in the Los Angeles, CA area on Saturday, April 18, 2020, please join us for a Luncheon, Fashion Show and Silent Auction presented by the LA area AMAA Child and Orphan Care Committee. All proceeds go to Child and Orphan Care Programs in Armenia and Artsakh. For reservations and for more information visit AMAA's website at [www.amaa.org](http://www.amaa.org)



*AMAA Summer Internship 2020*

## Save the Date

**AMAA Summer Internship**

**July 6 – 21, 2020**

**For senior year of High School students  
through post-college (mid-20's)**

**Theme: UNITY IN CHRIST**

**For more info call AMAA at 201.265.2607  
or visit AMAA's website at [www.amaa.org](http://www.amaa.org)**





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## Merдинian School Women's Auxiliary Christmas/New Year's Dinner at the Darakjians

**O**n Saturday, January 4, 2020, AMAA President Dr. Nazareth E. Darakjian and his wife Dr. Ani hosted the C & E Merдинian Armenian Evangelical School Women's Auxiliary Annual New Year's and Christmas dinner and get together. The group was honored with the presence of AMAA Executive Director/CEO Zaven Khanjian and his wife Sona, who has been a member and Chair of the Auxiliary for many years.

In the 1997 Yearbook of Merдинian School it is written: "In May 1997, the Women's Auxiliary of the Merдинian Armenian Evangelical School was formed. The purpose of the Auxiliary is to support Armenian Evangelical Education, promote interest in the Merдинian Armenian Evangelical School, further the mission of the School and render financial support, in all cooperating with the Principal and the Board of Directors. The Auxiliary is an affiliate of the Armenian Missionary Association of America." At the time, the Chairman of the Merдинian School Board was Zaven Khanjian, who has been very instrumental in forming the Women's Auxiliary.

The first meeting of the newly formed Women's Auxiliary was held at the home of Suzie Phillips in the presence of the Executive Director of the AMAA at the time, the late Rev. Dr. Movses Janbazian. The current Co-Chairs of the Women's Auxiliary are Ani Hanessian and Louisa Janbazian. □



## AMAA Now Accepting Scholarship Applications

**T**he Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) is now accepting applications for the 2020-2021 academic year for full-time undergraduate students of Armenian descent studying in North America.

Students interested in applying for scholarships should personally request the Application Form by calling 201-265-2607 or by email, [sponsorship@amaa.org](mailto:sponsorship@amaa.org). Previous recipients must reapply each year. It is the responsibility of the student to request an application form.

Incomplete items and/or missing documents will automatically disqualify an applicant.

All completed application forms must reach the AMAA Headquarters postmarked not later than May 1, 2020.

Awards are made by the Scholarship Committee, which takes into consideration the applicant's grades, financial need, the tuition cost of the college he/she will attend, accomplishments, future leadership potential and good character references. Please note, Scholarship Grant checks are issued directly to academic Institutions and not individuals.

# Shamlian Tatikian School Alumni Association Holds 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Banquet

**S**aturday, November 16, 2019 was a day of celebration in Glendale, CA at the Phoenicia Restaurant where more than 100 guests gathered for the Armenian Evangelical Shamlian Tatikian Secondary School of Bourdj Hamoud (Lebanon) Alumni Association's 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Banquet.

The Gala Dinner for alumni, former teachers, sponsors and guests, began with the Armenian and American National Anthems. Master of Ceremonies was alumnus Kevork Sarkissian who welcomed the guests and emphasized the mission of the Armenian Christian School and its vision for the School and future generations. Reverend Raffi Messerlain, Pastor of the Armenian Evangelical Church of Nor Marash in Bourdj Hamoud who travelled from Beirut for this special occasion, gave the Invocation Prayer.

Following the prayer, alumnus Cahir Zaven Hanessian greeted the guests and thanked the hardworking Committee members, as well as the donors, for their continuous support of the School. Mr. Hanessian said that the School needs help during the current hardship and indecisive situation in Lebanon.

After the dinner, School Principal Vartouhi Balekjian, who also travelled from Beirut, conveyed information about the School and

the students. She highly appreciated the help and the support that the alumni show to the School, as without this support the School would face even more challenges than what they are facing now. She honored the Alumni Association Chairman Zaven Hanessian with an Appreciation Plaque.

During the Banquet, Nerses Aroyan, a former Mathematics teacher at Shamlian Tatikian was also honored. Mr. Aroyan thanked the Committee for the honor. He described the School from an engineering point of view, as a cube with three dimensions – the length being 85 years, the width having students from all around the world, and the height the devoted education, spiritually and nationally, with high quality education.

Liza Manoyan, who had served on the Alumni Association, was also honored for her seven years of service to the Association.

Several donations were received during the dinner. Those who want to donate and support the Nor Marash School, may send their checks to STAA, c/o 1850 Samarkand Place, Glendale CA 91208. □



*L to R: Zaven Hanessian, Azniv Adamian and Honoree Liza Manoyan.*



*L to R: Azniv Adamian, Zaven Hanessian and Honoree Nerses Aroyan.*

## JAMES G. JAMESON ESSAY CONTEST

OPEN TO HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STUDENTS

**T**he James G. Jameson Essay Contest, sponsored by the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), runs every academic year starting in October, and is financed from the income of a special fund established by Mr. and Mrs. James G. Jameson of Brookline, MA.

All Armenian and part-Armenian students attending North American schools are eligible. Only unpublished essays are accepted, which are written in English and have a length of 1,000 to 2,000 words.

The topics of the Contest are required to touch upon some aspect of Armenian heritage and experience, such as religion, history, culture, literature, language, art, architecture, geography and economics.

Essays are judged on the basis of merit in such criteria as content, style, logic and reasoning, coherence, and usage.

Awards for the Contest are made in two categories: College/University contestants and High School contestants.

The deadline for entries is May 1, 2020.

Entries and/or inquiries should be directed to: James G. Jameson Essay Contest, c/o of The Armenian Missionary Association of America, 31 West Century Road, Paramus NJ 07652.



# AMAA Sundays Held in AEUNA Churches

During the past several months Zaven Khanjian, AMAA Executive Director/CEO, Rev. Mgrdich Melkonian, Pastor to Pastors in Armenia, and Levon Filian, former AMAA West Coast Director, visited three churches within the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America (AEUNA) to celebrate AMAA Sunday.

On Sunday, November 23, 2019, Mr. Khanjian was invited to speak at the Holy Trinity Armenian Church of North Hollywood, CA. During the Church Service Mr. Khanjian brought the English message. His theme was "Live Your Gratitude" which was based on Colossians 3:1-11. He also shared with the congregation the vision and mission of the AMAA.

On Sunday, January 26, 2020, Rev. Melkonian was invited to the Immanuel Armenian Congregational Church in Downey, CA, for AMAA Sunday. Rev. Melkonian's sermon topic was "Bringing to Jesus" based on Mark 10:13-16. During the fellowship following the worship service, Rev. Melkonian presented a brief report about AMAA's mission and outreach along with a powerpoint presentation. He thanked the members of the Immanuel Church and invited them to continue to be part of the AMAA with their prayers and financial support.

Also on Sunday, January 26, 2020 Mr. Filian visited the Outreach for Armenians Church in Glendale, CA. He took part in the Worship Service and updated the congregations on the Mission and Outreach Program of the AMAA in 24 countries around the world.

We would like to extend our special thanks to the pastors, councils and the congregations of the churches for their ongoing support and encouragement for the Mission and Outreach of the AMAA. □



AMAA Sunday Fellowship Hours at the Immanuel Armenian Congregational Church of Downey, CA.



Zaven Khanjian at Holy Trinity Armenian Church of North Hollywood, CA.

## Meet Our Staff at AMAA

### Nerses Rastguelenian, Controller

Nerses Rastguelenian joined the AMAA in April 2019. Nerses oversees the financial functions of the AMAA. He is married to Lucy Rastguelenian who is Manager of the AMAA's Sponsorship and Scholarship Department.

Nerses grew up in Beirut, Lebanon, where he attended the Armenian Evangelical Shamlian Tatikian High School in Nor Marash, Bourj Hammoud. During the civil war, he moved to the United States along with his family. He continued his education at Montclair State University in NJ and graduated with a BS degree in Finance and Accounting. Prior to the AMAA, he worked with various corporations in a managerial capacity.

Nerses' desire has always been to use his talents for the Kingdom of God and the AMAA is the way for him to do that. Nerses is also passionate about evangelism. He is currently involved with the "Djeshmardutian Khoske" ministry, which broadcasts a live weekly program in Armenian both over the internet and on television which spreads the Good News of the Gospel to Armenians all around the world.

Nerses, Lucy and their two children Talaar and Nahreg, serve the Lord at the Armenian Brotherhood Bible Church in New Milford, NJ, where he is the volunteer Pastor.





**AMAA Executive Director/CEO Zaven Khanjian's letter of tribute to Michael Youssefian on the occasion of a Banquet honoring his life long service held on Saturday, February 15, 2020 at the Armenian Cilicia Evangelical Church of Pasadena, CA.**

**ARMENIAN MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA**  
Ամերիկայի Հայ Առետարանչական Ընկերակցութիւն



Փետրուար 15, 2020

Միքայել Եուսուֆեան  
Փասատինա, Գալիֆորնիա

Սիրելի Միքայել,

Ամերիկայի Հայ Առետարանչական Ընկերակցութեան անունով կ'ողջունեմ ձեր Աստուածահաճոյ, Մաշտոցանուէր, բեղմնաւոր եւ արգասաբեր կեանքին յուրանայ երեկոն, որ տեղի կ'ունենայ Փասատինայի Հայ Առետարանական Կիլիկիա Եկեղեցւոյ երդիքին տակ:

Արդարեւ տասնամեակներու վրայ երկարած ձեր հոգեւոր, գրական, ազգային, գաղութային, կրթական, եւ դաստիարակչական ուրիշներուն մէջ տածած ծառայութիւնները անպարագիծ օրինութեան աղբիւր դարձած են անհայրենիք բայց եւ ոչ անտէր հայ ժողովուրդի՝ Սփիւքի մը պարտադրուած դաժան պայմանները ժառանգող մնացորդացի զաւակներուն:

Սիրելի Միքայել, ոչ անտէրի բնորոշումը պատահական չէ: Աստուած բարի է եւ իր ողորմութեամբ պարտաւորած է ցեղասպանութեան զոհ Հայկի տոհմը: Աստուածային անսահման կարողութեան պտուղն է սակայն, բարի եւ հաւատարիմ մարդոց ընտրութիւնը իր սիրոյ եւ հաւատարմութեան ցուցաբերումին մէջ: Դուք՝ այդ ընտրեալներէն էք, որոնց ցանած Սահակ Մեսրոպեան բարիքը առատօրէն հնձելու բերկրանքը կ'ապրի Գալիֆորնիայի գաղութը:

Ու այդ ծառայութեան դասնեպսակը այն է որ դուք ըրիք այդ բոլորը անշահախնդիր ոգիով, անանձնական սիրով եւ անսակարկ նուիրումով:

Ձեր արգասաբեր նպաստը հայ գրականութեան անդաստանին յուրի կոչուելու ճանապարհին է, հարստացնելով Մեսրոպեան պանծալի մշակոյթը եւ յաջորդական գրքերու առիթնող բովանդակութեամբ, պրիսմակէ մը անցած գոյներու հարստութեամբ փառաբանելով զ'Աստուած, ներբողելով լեզուն, փայլատակելով սերունդներու ապագան եւ ձեր հետ բարձրացնելով մարդ արարածը:

Սիրելի Միքայել, մեր ծանօթութեան «ցայգալոյսէն մայրամուտ», ձեր բանաւոր թէ գրաւոր «նամակներու» ընդմէջէն նուագուող «հոգիի երգեր»ու խրախճանքը քաղծր եւ հոգեթովիչ է: Մեր մաղթանքն է առ Աստուած որ ձեզ պարգեւէ պայծառամտութիւն եւ քաջառողջութիւն շարունակելու համար հաւակորիզ եւ Զրիստոսաբոյր ձեր ծառայութիւնն ու ստեղծագործութիւնը, իմաստաւորելով Աստուածատուր կեանքի մը երկրային նպատակը:

Սիրով եւ յորգանքով՝

Չպէն Եւսուֆեան  
Գործադիր Տնօրէն



"AND THIS GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM SHALL BE PREACHED IN ALL THE WORLD FOR A WITNESS UNTO ALL NATIONS..." MATTHEW 24:14  
«Այս արքայութեան աւետարանը պիտի քարոզուի ամբողջ երկրագունդին մէջ իբր վկայութիւն բոլոր ազգերուն...» Մատթ. 24.14  
31 West Century Road, Paramus, NJ 07652 Tel: 201-265-2607 / 2608 Email: info@amaa.org www.amaa.org



# Թոյլ Տանք Չարգանայ Երկիրը

"When they go low, we go high."

Michele Obama

## Չաւէն Խանճեան



ուր կարդացա՞՞ծ էք Բագրատ Այվազեանի «Անին Ծախուեցաւ»:

Կամ Ստեփան Չօրեանի «Պապ Թագաւոր»ը:

Դուր կարդացա՞՞ծ էք Դերենիկ Տեմիրճեանի «Վարդանանք»ը:

Կամ Սերօ Խանգատեանի «Մխիթար Սպարապետ»ը::

Հայոց պատմութեան հարազատ էջերէն հիւսուած վէպեր են վերոյիշեալները որ կ'երկարին չորրորդ դարէն մինչեւ տասնըութերորդ դար, ընդհանրապէս տարածուելով հայ ժողովուրդի յետ քրիստոնէութեան ընդունման պատմութեան ժամանակամիջոցին վրայ:

Թէեւ վէպ են վերոյիշեալ հատորները, սակայն այնտեղ մեր պատմագետ հեղինակները կարողացած են հայելին դառնալ օրուայ պատմաբաղաճական իրադարձութիւններու, օրուայ ծանօթ աշխարհի գերիշխող ուժերու, ներքին եւ արտաքին իշխանական հոսանքներու, աշխարհաբաղաճական բարի կամ չար դրացնութիւններու, աշխարհային եւ եկեղեցական իշխանութիւններու յարափոփոխ յարաբերութեան եւ այս բոլորին մէջ հանգոյցներ ստեղծող եւ գոյացնող ճակատագրական սադրանքներու, դաւադրութիւններու եւ նենգամտութեան:

Չէ՞ք կարդացած վերոյիշեալ վէպերը:

Ոչի՞նչ:

Ինծի կը թուի թէ ժամանակակից մեր պատմութիւնը, գուցէ մի քիչ մշուշապատ բայց արդիական տարազներով եւ բովանդակութեամբ եւ անպայման 21րդ դարու *թէքնոլոճի* ծնունդ հասարակական եւ ընկերային համացանցերու էջերով մեզ կը յիշեցնէ վերոյիշեալ վէպերով ցոլացուած մեր պատմութեան ափսոսալի էջերը:

Անկախութեան առաջին քսանութ տարիներու փտածութեան, յուսախաբութեան, յուսալքութեան, արտագաղթի եւ լայնածաւալ աղքատութեան խեղդիչ հանգրուանէ մը ետք, հազիւ հեշտանքը տրուեցաւ մեր ժողովուրդին՝ ինք ի՛ր ճակատագրի տերը եղած ըլլալուն, ահա ծրագրուած ապատեղեկատուութեան խլացնող աղմկալի խոյանքներու ականատեսներն ենք:

Չիրար խաչաձեւող ամբաստանութիւններ, զրպարտութիւններ, հնարքներով ծածկուած դիմատետրեան տխեղձ ազդեր, բռնազբօսիկ գործողութիւններ, այս բոլորը հայրենական լրատուական հրապարակը խիտ կերպով հագեցուցած են:

Հայաստանի առաջին հանրապետութեան բախտորոշ հարիւրամեակին, հայ ժողովուրդը՝ խաղաղ, անարիւն եւ մասսայական հրապարակային պոռթկումով մը տէր դարձաւ իր ճակատագրին

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եւ ժողովրդարար կարգերու հաստատումով, արմատականօրէն փոխեց իր գոյատեւման ուղղութիւնը:

Երկիրը ունի իր սահմանադրական կարգերը եւ ամէն ինչ որ կատարուեցաւ, ուղղամտօրէն, գիտակցօրէն եւ ամենայն ողջամտութեամբ ընթացաւ սահմանադրական կարգերով հաստատուած օրէնքի լոյսին տակ:

Դէ՛հ, քննանդատելիք բան կա՞յ, անպայմա՛ն կայ: Քաղաքակիրթ ոճով քննադատենք:

Թող մեր քննադատութիւնը ըլլայ կառուցողական, կենսագործիչ, օգտակար եւ բարին ընդհանուրին կամեցող:

Յաճախ կը հպարտանանք քրիստոնեւութիւնը ընդունող առաջին ազգը ըլլալու իրականութեամբ:

Հազար եօթը հարիւր տասնը ութը տարիէ ի վեր ի՞նչ սորուեցանք կիրարկել Քրիստոսի վարդապետութենէն:

Հաւատք քարոզելու մէջ սխալ բան չկայ բայց այդ չէ իմ պատգամս: Քրիստոնեական վարդապետութիւնը քաղաքակրթութեան պատուանդան է: Վարուելակե՛րպ: Անտառի օրէնքէն մարդ արարածը դուրս հանող վարուելակերպ: Յարգանքի եւ խոնարհութեան վարուելակերպ: Հոգածութեան եւ սիրոյ վարուելակերպ: Երկայնամտութեան եւ հանդուրժողութեան վարուելակերպ: «Ծանիր Ձքեզ» եան վարուելակերպ: Եւ վերջապէս իմաստութեան արմատը հանդիսացող, մեծամտութենէ հեռու մնացող գիտակցութիւն՝ թէ մեզմէ ոեւէ մէկը ամենագէտ չէ, անսխալ չէ, ամենակարող չէ եւ օրէնքէն վեր չէ:

Հայ ժողովուրդը այսօր վստահութեան քուէն տուած է: Այդ վստահութիւնը յաւիտենական չէ: Այդ վստահութիւնը անխախտելի ալ չէ, այլ ետ կոչուելու ատակ՝ օրէնքի սահմաններու պարագիծով:

Տասնամեակներու օրինազանցութիւններէ, հարստահարումէ եւ ինքնահարստացումներէ ետք, այսօր՝ մաքուր, բարոյականի տէր եւ ժողովուրդին ծառայելու ոգին բարձր պահող իշխանութիւն մը ունի հայրենիքը:

Սխալական ե՞ն: Անշո՛ւշտ:

Անփորձ ե՞ն: Յարաբերական է եւ օգնենք շահին այդ փորձառութիւնը:

Թոյլ տանք ծառայեն՝ առանց իշխանութեան գլուխ գալու այլոց փափաքը խանգարելու:

Թոյլ տանք ծառայեն՝ սատարելով պետութեան եւ ժողովուրդին, որովհետեւ ներելի չէ մեզի որեւէ պատճառաւ, ժողովուրդի զարգացումին եւ հայրենիքի հզօրացումին նպաստող ամենափոքր առիթն իսկ կորսնցնել:

Իմաստութեան գազաթնակետը մեծամիտ եւ յաւակնոտ ղեկավարներու իմացականութեան մէջ չէ՝ այլ ժողովուրդի հաւաքական կամքին մէջ:

Թոյլ տա՛նք ժողովուրդի կամքը իր ժողովրդավարական ընթացքը շարունակէ:

Թոյլ տա՛նք եւ օգնենք որ երկիրը խաղաղօրէն զարգանայ, հզօրանայ:

Մեր բոլորին հայրենասիրութեան եւ քաղաքացիութեան ճիտի պարտքն է այդ:

Այսօրուայ Հոռովմը, Բիւզանդիոնը, Շապուհն ու Թուրքը լորձնաշուրթն դռան են:

Թոյլ տա՛նք զարգանայ երկիրը: □



# Ո՞վ է Ընկերս, Բարեկամս

Ղուկաս 10. 25-28, Մարկոս 3. 31-35

Վեր. Սերոբ Մկրտիչեան\*

**Ա**ռածը կ'ըսէ, Ըսէ ընկերդ, ըսեմ ով ըլլալդ: Ի՞նչ կը նշանակէ Ընկեր կամ Բարեկամ: Իւրաքանչիւր անձ ունի սահմանում մը կամ բացատրութիւն մը բարեկամութեան:

Սակայն եթէ իսկապէս կ'ուզենք գիտնալ թէ ի՞նչ կը նշանակէ բարեկամութիւն, պէտք է անկեղծաբար պատասխանենք կարգ մը հարցումներու:

Ի՞նչ կը փնտռես բարեկամիդ մէջ:

Քանի՞ բարեկամ ունիս: Յաճախ կը տեսնուի՞ք:

Ի՞նչ կ'ընէք միասին:

Կրնա՞ս ապրիլ առանց բարեկամներուդ:

Կրնա՞ս բարեկամութիւնդ պահել հարցեր եւ տարակարծութիւններ ստեղծուելէ ետք:

Միշտ նոր բարեկամներ կ'ունենա՞ս:

Դուն լաւ բարեկամ ես քու բարեկամներուդ:

Ըստ Փիլիսոփաներու սահմանումին, Արիստօթել կ'ըսէ.- «Բարեկամութիւն կը նշանակէ նոյն հոգին որ կ'ապրի անձերու միջեւ»:

Ուրիշ մը կ'ըսէ.- «Երբ կ'ունենաս ճշմարիտ բարեկամ, կը նշանակէ ունիս քու անձիդ նմանող ուրիշ մը»:

Իսկ Վոլթեր (Voltaire), Ֆրանսացի փիլիսոփան կ'ըսէ. - «Բարեկամութիւնը, հոգիին ամուսնութիւնն է»:

Այսինքն, բարեկամը այն անձն է որուն հետ կ'ունենաս յատուկ յարաբերութիւն:

Իրականութեան մէջ, կեղծ բարեկամը կը նմանի մեր շուրթին, երբ արեւ ըլլայ, միշտ մեզի հետ կ'ըլլայ եւ կարծէք ձեռով մը փակած կ'ըլլայ մեզի: Իսկ երբ մութ ըլլայ, շուրթը կ'անհետի: Բայց իսկական բարեկամը այն է՝ երբ նեղութեան մէջ ես, առաջին անգամ ինք կը հասնի քեզի, մինչ այդ շատ մը՝ իրենք զիրենք բարեկամ կարծողները, կը ձգեն ու կը հեռանան քեզմէ:

Արդեօք այս չէ՞ր նաեւ Աստուածաշունչին մէջ ներկայացուածը՝ «Բարի Սամարացի»ին առակին ընդմէջէն: Օրինականը կ'ուզէր գիտնալ թէ ո՞վ էր իր ընկերը: Ի պատասխան, Տէր Յիսուս պատմեց Բարի Սամարացիին առակը:

Առակին մէջ կը տեսնենք՝

Կղերականը նախընտրեց տաճարը, անոր պաշտամունքը եւ ծէսը փոխանակ մարդ արարածին ցաւը:

Ղեւտացին չ'ուզեց պատասխանատուութիւն ստանձնել եւ հետեւաբար ձգեց ու գնաց:

Իսկ Սամարացին՝ որուն հետ Հրեաները չէին յարաբերեր, մօտեցաւ եւ օգնութեան ձեռք երկարեց:

Ո՞վ է իմ ընկերս հարցումին, Տէր Յիսուսի պատասխանը կ'ընդգրկէր հետեւեալը.- Պէտք է ձեռք երկարել եւ օգնել բոլոր անոնց, որոնք դժուար կացութիւններու մէջ են:

Մէկ խօսքով, ռեւէ մէկ անհատ, որեւէ երկրի մէջ երբ կարիքը եւ պէտքը ունի, ան է մեր ընկերը եւ բարեկամը: Այսինքն, ռեւէ կարիքաւոր մարդ արարած, մեր բարեկամը ըլլալու է: Իսկ օգնութիւնը պէտք է ըլլայ գործնական եւ ոչ թէ միայն զգացական՝ ցաւակից ըլլալ եւ միայն ցաւ զգալ:

Շատ հաւանաբար առակին՝ թէ կղերականը եւ թէ Ղեւտացին, ցաւեցան բայց գործնական բան մը չըրին: Այսինքն՝ ցաւակցիլը իրական կը դառնայ շօշափելի կերպով՝ գործով:

Իրականութեան մէջ, իսկական բարեկամը այն է երբ կը նոյնանայ երկու անձերու փորձառութիւնը, հետաքրքրութիւնը եւ նպատակը:

Այսինքն, երբ նոյն նպատակը կը հետապնդուի, հոն կարելի կ'ըլլայ գտնել բարեկամութիւն:

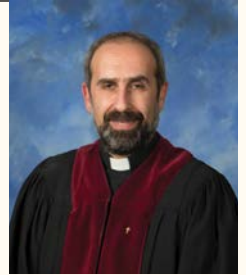
Երբ Տէր Յիսուսի նայինք, հոն կրնանք գտնել Սէր եւ գործակցութիւն:

Երբ Տէր Յիսուսի նայինք, կը գիտակցինք որ Ինք սիրեց մեզ եւ շեշտեց՝ ընկերդ սիրես քու անձիդ պէս: Այսինքն՝ սիրել:

Այսօր երբ կը խօսինք մարդոց հետ սիրոյ մասին, այսինքն սիրել զիրար եւ ամբողջ մարդկութիւնը, կը նկատենք թէ շատերու համար տրամաբանական չի թուիր եւ ոչ ալ գործնական:

Մարդիկ գիտեն եւ կամ կը կարծեն թէ գիտեն թէ ի՞նչ կը նշանակէ սէր: Եւ այս պատճառաւ է որ կը սիրեն կարգ մը անձեր եւ ոչ ուրիշներ: Այլ խօսքով, այսօր մարդիկ կը հաւնին եւ կամ կ'ախորժին կարգ մը անձերէ ու չեն հաւնիր ուրիշներ, որովհետեւ իրենց հիմնական սխալը այն է թէ իրենք կը մտածեն սիրոյ մասին որպէս զգացում եւ յուզում:

Կասկած չկայ թէ չենք կրնար ուղղակիօրէն զսպել եւ հակակշռել մեր զգացումները: Շիտակ է թէ կը հաւնինք կարգ մը անձեր ու չենք հաւնիր ուրիշներ: Այս մէկը



իրականություն է: Բայց կարելի է, ինչպե՞ս պիտի սիրենք անձեր որոնց չենք համար:

Ընկեր սիրելը կուգայ Քրիստոնեության այն Աստուածաբանական վարդապետությունն որ կ'ըստ.- «Աստուած սեր է»: Բայց ի՞նչ տեսակի սեր:

Հոս կը խօսինք Աստուածային սիրոյ մասին եւ ոչ թէ բարեկամական, եղբայրական եւ կամ զգացական սիրոյ մասին:

Ընդհանրապէս երբ կ'ըսենք Աստուած սեր է, մեր շեշտը կը դնենք «Սեր» բառին վրայ եւ ոչ թէ «Աստուած» բառին վրայ, որովհետեւ կը սահմանենք զԱստուած մարդկային դիտանկիւնէ: Բայց պէտք է մեր շեշտը դնենք Աստուծոյ վրայ, որովհետեւ Աստուած Իր էութեամբ, ինքնին սեր է, եւ ոչ թէ մարդկային դիրք կամ գործ:

Այլ խօսքով, ոչ թէ «սերը» գիտնալով է որ զԱստուած կը ճանչնանք այլ ո՞վ որ Աստուած կը ճանչնայ, կը գիտնայ նաեւ թէ ի՞նչ կը նշանակէ «սեր» եւ կամ «սիրել»:

Բայց մէկը չի ճանչնար զԱստուած, բացի այն ատեն երբ Աստուած կը յայտնուի իրեն: Ուրեմն, երբ Աստուած կը յայտնուի մարդոց, այն ատեն է որ մարդիկ կը գիտնան սիրոյ ի՞նչ ըլլալը:

Աստուած յայտնուեցաւ Յիսուս Քրիստոսի միջոցաւ: Ուրեմն մէկը չի գիտնար սիրոյ ի՞նչ ըլլալը եթէ չճանչնայ Սիրոյ Աղբիւր եղող՝ Տէր Յիսուս Քրիստոս:

Իսկ եթէ կ'ուզենք ճանչնալ Յիսուս Քրիստոս, պէտք է ընդունինք զայն իբր Տէր ու Փրկիչ:

Յովհաննու Աւետարանի 3.16-ին մէջ կը կարդանք.- «Վասնզի Աստուած այնպէս սիրեց աշխարհը մինչեւ Իր Սիածին Որդին տուաւ, որպէսզի ամէն ով որ անոր հաւատայ չի կորսուի, հապա յաւիտեանական կեանք ունենայ»:

Մէկ խօսքով, կեանքի եւ սիրոյ աղբիւրը, խաչեալ ու յարուցեալ Քրիստոս Ինքն է:

Մենք կը սիրենք զիրար որովհետեւ Աստուած սիրեց մեզ ու Ինքն էր նախաձեռնողը: Առանց իր սիրոյն մենք պիտի չկարենայինք սիրել զիրար: Այս մէկը յայտնի եղաւ երբ Աստուած յայտնուեցաւ Յիսուս Քրիստոսի միջոցաւ, որը խաչուեցաւ մեզմէ իւրաքանչիւրին համար:

Այս է Քրիստոնէական սերը ուղղուած անհաճոյ անձին, նոյնիսկ մեր հակառակորդներուն: Որովհետեւ այս տեսակի սեր մըն է որ յայտնուեցաւ մեզի՝ Աստուծմէ:

Հաւատացեալին սերը իր ընկերին, բարեկամին ու դրացիին հանդէպ շատ խորհրդաւոր, գաղտնի ու զարմանալի ձեւով կը գործէ ու կը զարգանայ: Որովհետեւ երբ սիրելու գործողութիւնը կը սկսինք, փորձառութիւնը կ'ունենանք Աստուծոյ սիրոյն աւելի իմաստալից ու հասկնալի ձեւով: Երբ կը սիրենք զիրար եւ մեր նմանը, այս սերը կը ստիպէ ալ աւելի ճանչնալ ու խորանալ Աստուծոյ՝ մեզի հանդէպ ունեցած սիրոյն մէջ: Այսինքն, այս մէկը ալ աւելի կը զօրացնէ մեր սերը թէ իրարու հանդէպ եւ թէ մեր նմանին հանդէպ:

Իրականութեան մէջ, ընկեր սիրելը մարդկային շնորհք եւ ազնուութիւն չէ, այլ ցոլացումն ու անդրադարձն է Աստուածային շնորհքին, ողորմութեան եւ սիրոյն:

Այսինքն, պէտք չէ սիրենք պարզապէս սիրելու համար, այլ մեր ունեցած սերը մարդ արարածին հանդէպ պէտք է ըլլայ Աստուածային սիրոյ ցոլացումը: Ուրիշ խօսքով, զիրար սիրելու գաղափարը միշտ պէտք է մօտէն կապուած ըլլայ անոր ներշնչման, այսինքն՝ Յիսուս Քրիստոսի:

Ուրեմն չենք կրնար սիրել ոչ զիրար եւ ոչ ալ մեր նմանը, եթէ չենք ընդունած Աստուածային սերը: Այսինքն, անկարելի է սիրել մեր նմանը Աստուածային սիրով, եթէ չենք ընդունած Յիսուս Քրիստոսը:

Ամէն տարի Մարտ ամսուան մէջ, աշխարհի տարածքին, Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցին (Հիմնուած 1846-ին), կ'անդրադառնայ եւ Աստուծոյ փառք կու տայ իր Աւետարանչական թելին՝ Ամերիկայի Հայ Աւետարանչական Ընկերակցութեան (հիմնուած 1918-ին) եւ անոր տարած նուիրական ծառայութիւններուն համար, որ կը մատուցանէ աշխարհի 24 տարբեր երկիրներու մէջ՝ ներառեալ Հայաստան, Արցախ եւ Ջաւախք:

Հետեւելով Տէր Յիսուսի օրինակին, Անոր ուսուցումներուն եւ Բարի Սամարացիին նման՝ Հայ Աւետարանչական Ընկերակցութիւնը իրեն համար շատ յստակ ըրած է, թէ ո՞վ է իր ընկերը: Առանց որեւէ յարանումանական եւ գաղափարական խտրականութեան, հոն ուր որ կարիք կը տեսնուի, ան կը հասնի, ձեռք կ'երկարէ եւ կը ծառայէ իր նմանին՝ մարդ արարածին:

Այսօր, ցաւ ի սիրտ, մարդ արարածը կը տառապի փառասիրութենէ, անձնասիրութենէ, հաճոյասիրութենէ եւ նաեւ առանձնութենէ:

Իսկ միւս կողմէ, ըլլայ Միջին Արեւելքի մէջ եւ կամ Մայր Հայրենիքի մէջ, կարիքաւորներուն թիւը ալ աւելիով կը շատնայ:

Ժամանակն է արթննալ, շրջահայեաց ըլլալով, գիտակցիլ եւ անդրադառնալ, թէ հաւատացեալը եթէ չսիրէ դիմացինը Քրիստոսի սիրով, չի կրնար գտնել բարեկամ եւ ոչ ալ կրնայ բարեկամ ըլլալ ուրիշին:

Հետեւեալքա՝ կ'ուզե՞ս գիտնալ թէ ով է ընկերդ: Այցելէ հիւանդանոցի մէջ եղող անյոյս եւ ցաւերու մէջ եղող հիւանդը, նայէ իր աչքերուն եւ հարցուր դուն քեզի, թէ ի՞նչ կրնաս ընել:

Կ'ուզե՞ս գիտնալ թէ ո՞վ է ընկերդ: Այցելէ կարիքաւոր ընտանիք մը, անտուն մը, սգաւոր մը, ծերունի մը, այրի մը, որք մանուկ կամ պատանի մը, կարիքաւոր աշակերտ մը, անկողինի մէջ դատապարտուած մը եւ նայիր ի՞նչ ունիս ընելիք:

Մէկ խօսքով, մի սպասեր թէ ո՞վ կ'ուզէ ընկեր ըլլալ քեզի: Այլ՝ հետեւելով Բարի Սամարացիի օրինակին, սիրէ ընկերդ քու անձիդ պէս եւ այն ատեն պիտի գիտնաս եւ գտած պիտի ըլլաս թէ ո՞վ է քու ընկերդ եւ դուն որո՞ւ բարեկամ ես: Ամէն: □

\* Վեր. Սերոբ Մկրտիչեան Երեց հովիւն Է Հայ Կիլիկիա Աւետարանական Եկեղեցիի, Փասսատինա, Քալիֆորնիա:



# Հոգեւոր Առաջնորդներու Պէտքը

**Հոլնձքը շատ է բայց մշակները քիչ. Ուստի հոլնձքին Տէրոջը աղաչեցէք որ մշակներ հասնէ իր հոլնձքին:** Մատթէոս 9. 37

## Վեր. Եսայի Սարմազեան

**Ա**յսօր, բոլոր ժամանակներէն աւելի, պէտքը կայ հոգեւոր առաջնորդներու, ոչ միայն եկեղեցական, այլ նաեւ աշխարհական, որովհետեւ, ըստ աւետարանական եկեղեցիներու հասկացողութեան, բոլոր հաւատացեալներն ալ քահանաներ են: Բայց քանի որ եկեղեցականները լման ժամանակով հոգեւոր առաջնորդներ են, անոնց դերը աւելի կարեւոր է, պակասը աւելի զգալի է եւ պէտքը հրամայական:

Ահա ճիշդ ասոր համար էր, որ Ամերիկայի Հայ Աւետարանական Ընկերակցութիւնը իր 74-րդ տարեկան ժողովին՝ բոլոր ներկաներուն, եւ յատկապէս հովիւներուն համար կազմակերպած էր *սէմինար* մը, Չորեքշաբթի 13 եւ Հինգշաբթի 14 Հոկտեմբեր 1993-ին, որու նիւթն էր՝ «Գտնել եւ Պատրաստել Հոգեւոր Հովիւներ» (Recruiting and Training Christian Workers): Վեր. Տանըլտ Սմիթ (Rev. Donald Smith) խօսեցաւ հոգեւոր առաջնորդներու կոչումին, յատկանիշներուն, առաքինութիւններուն եւ նախապատուութիւններուն շուրջ: Վեր. Դոկտ. Վահան Թութիկեան խօսեցաւ յատկապէս Հայ Աւետարանական հովիւին յատկանիշներուն, պարտականութիւններուն եւ դիմագրաւած դժուարութիւններուն շուրջ: Իսկ Վեր. Դոկտ. Կիրակոս Զօփորեան խօսեցաւ Հայ Աւետարանական աշխարհականներու պարտականութիւններուն շուրջ: Այս բոլորին մէջ մասնաւոր շեշտ դրուեցաւ *սէմինարի* «Հոգեւոր Առաջնորդներու Պէտքը» նիւթին վրայ:

## Ա. ԸՆԴՀԱՆՈՒՐ ՊԱՏԿԵՐԸ ԵԿԵՂԵՑԻՆԵՐՈՒՆ

Ըսուեցաւ թէ Մերձաւոր Արեւելքի Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցիներու Միութիւնը (25 եկեղեցի) ունի 14 մանչ եւ աղջիկ ուսանողներ

Աստուածաբանական Ճեմարանին մէջ եւ 5 թափուր բնմ: Փրանսայի Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցիներու Միութիւնը (14 եկեղեցի եւ 7 հովիւ), թէւ այժմ թափուր բնմ չունի, սակայն ոչ մէկ աստուածաբանական ուսանող ունի: Հիւսիսային Ամերիկայի Հայ Աւետարանական Միութիւնը (20 եկեղեցի), ունի 5 թափուր բնմ եւ 3 աստուածաբանական ուսանողներ: Բայց աստուածաբանական բոլոր ուսանողներն ալ շրջանաւարտ ըլլալէ ետք անպայման ալ Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցիներու հովիւներ չեն ըլլար – ոմանք աղջիկ ըլլալով, ոմանք հովուական ասպարէզ չ'ընդգրկելով, ուրիշներ ալ, յատկապէս Հիւսիսային Ամերիկայի մէջ, ոչ Հայ բնմերու ծառայելով, ոմանք ալ կոչում չունենալով, բոլորովին կը ձգեն հոգեւոր ծառայութիւնը:

## Բ. ԱՇԽԱՐՀԻԿ ԳԱՂԱՓԱՐԱԲԱՆՈՒԹԻՒՆՆԵՐ

Անշուշտ թէ պատճառները շատ են, որոնցմէ գլխաւորները նկատուեցան.-

1. Կոչումի պակաս.- Ամէն բանէ առաջ անհրաժեշտ է կոչում ունենալ, կանչուած ըլլալով Աստուծմէ կամ Քրիստոսի կողմէ՝ Սուրբ Հոգիով ընտրուած, լեցուած եւ օժտուած ըլլալ, ըսաւ Վեր. Դոկտ. Տանըլտ Սմիթ: Աբրահամ, Մովսէս եւ բոլոր մարգարէները, ինչպէս նաեւ Յիսուսի աշակերտները եւ առաքեալները կոչում ունէին, կանչուած էին Աստուծոյ պատգամները տարածելու, եւ ապա անոնք պատրաստուեցան ծառայելու: Կոչումը գրադում չէ, ըսաւ ան (vocation is not occupation), այլ ծառայութիւն է Աստուծոյ, իրարու եւ աշխարհի, որու լաւագոյն օրինակը Յիսուս Քրիստոսն է:
2. Աշխարհիկ գաղափարաբանութիւններ.- Յատկապէս Արեւմտեան մշակոյթին մէջ նիւթապաշտութիւնը եւ ազատ սեռային կեանք

մը ապրելու աշխարհիկ փիլիսոփայությունները պատճառ են որ երիտասարդները ականջ զոցեն հոգեւոր կոչերու: Հովիւներու համեմատաբար նիւթական անապահովութիւնը եւ հանոյքներէ զրկուած ըլլալը չեն քաջալերեր զիրենք ընդգրկելու հովուական ասպարէզը:

3. Հովիւներու վիճելի կամ հակասական կեանքը.- Հովիւներու նկարագրի տկար գիծերը – անպատասխանատու, թոյլ, աններող, վերջապէս իր կոչումը հակասող ապրելակերպը, պատճառներ են որ շատեր կը մերժեն հոգեւոր ասպարէզը: Ինչ որ ալ ըլլան պայմանները, հովիւներէն կ'ակնկալուի ըլլալ ուղղամիտ, բարի օրինակ, վստահելի, հոգեւոր եւ կատարեալ: Եթէ այս բոլորը չըլլան, ժողովուրդը հակամէտ է խրոչելու եւ արդարացնելու ինքզինք որ չընդգրկէ հովուական ասպարէզը:
4. Ժողովուրդին քննադատութիւնը ու պահանջ-կոտորութիւնը.- Երբ ժողովուրդը յանախ կը քննադատէ հովիւներն ու հոգեւորները, կամ երբ ոմանց հանդէպ շատ պահանջկոտ կ'ըլլայ, ոչ միայն երիտասարդներէն ոմանք չեն քաջալերուիր ընդգրկելու հովուական ասպարէզը, այլ նաեւ պաշտօնի վրայ եղող հովիւները ականայ կը լքեն իրենց ասպարէզը, պատճառաբանելով թէ իրենք ալ մարդ են կամ գերամարդ (superman) չեն:

#### **Գ. ՈՒՐԿԷ՝ ՊԻՏԻ ԳԱՆ ՀՈՎՈՒՄԿԱՆ ԹԵԿՆԱԾՈՒՆԵՐԸ**

Ամէն իսկուէ ու դասակարգէ – հարուստ, աղքատ կամ բարեկեցիկ, եւ ամէն տարիքէ՝ պատանի, երիտասարդ կամ չափահաս: Բայց լաւագոյն տեղերը Կիրակնօրեայ եւ առօրեայ դպրոցները, մանաւանդ պատանիներու եւ երիտասարդներու Սուրբ Գիրքի սերտողութիւններն ու համահաւաքներն են: Եւ այս ընտղները պիտի ըլլան ոչ միայն հովիւները, այլ նաեւ, ու մանաւանդ երիտասարդաց գործիչները, եկեղեցիներու ժողովականները, ինչպէս նաեւ ծնողները:

#### **Դ. ՀՈՎԻՆԵՐՈՒ ԳԼԽԱՒՈՐ ՊԱՐՏԱԿԱՆՈՒԹԻՒՆՆԵՐԸ**

Ներկաներուն մեծամասնութիւնը համաձայն էին որ հովիւի մը առաջին եւ կարեւորագոյն գործը Աստուծոյ Խօսքին սպասարկութիւնն է – Անոր քարոզութիւնը եւ ուսուցումը Սուրբ Հոգիին զօրութիւնով, հեղինակութիւնով եւ հաւատարմութեամբ: Իսկ երկրորդ կարեւոր պար-

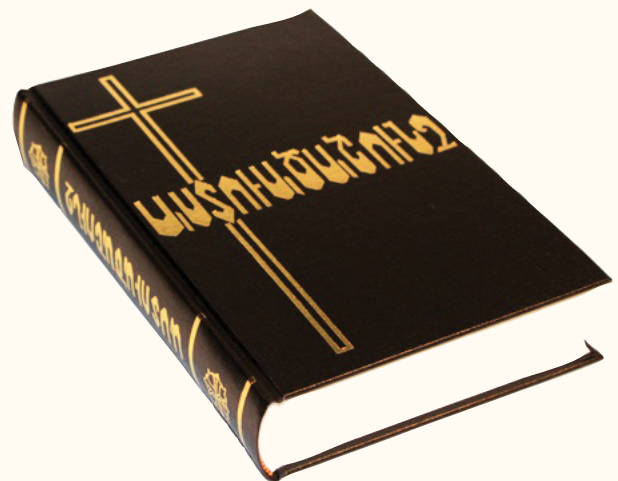
տականութիւնն է հովուութիւնը – հաւատացեալներուն անումը եւ զօրացումը իբր Զրիստոսի Եկեղեցիին կամ Մարմինին անդամները:

#### **Ե. ԻՆՉ Է ՁԵՒՐ ՀՈՎՈՒՄԿԱՆ ԹԵԿՆԱԾՈՒՆԵՐ ՈՒՆԵՆԱԼՈՒ**

Կարող անձեր փնտռել եւ պատրաստել չէ, այլ աղօթել Աստուծոյ ամէն բանէ առաջ, սրտանց, անընդհատ եւ պաղատանքով: Ինչո՞ւ: Որովհետեւ ժողովուրդը, Յիսուսի բառով՝ հունձքը, կը պատկանի Աստուծոյ եւ Ինք գիտէ որոնք յարմար եւ արժանի են կամ չեն Իր գործին համար:

Անգամ մը եկեղեցիի մը պարբերաթերթին մէջ կարդացի յօդուած մը, որուն նիւթն էր՝ «Մեղաւորներուն Փրկութեան Համար Մի Աղօթէք»: Անշուշտ զարմացայ եւ ցնցուեցաւ: Բայց հանդարտեցայ երբ կարդացի լման յօդուածը եւ հասկցայ որ հեղինակը ըսել կ'ուզէր, որ փոխանակ անոնց համար աղօթելու, մեր պարտականութիւնն է աղօթել Աստուծոյ, որ անոնց համար մշակներ հայթայթէ:

Բայց չմոռնանք որ հոգեւոր մշակներու հայթայթումը կախեալ է մեր աղօթքէն՝ հաւատացեալներու աղօթքէն: Յիսուս իր աշակերտներուն ըսաւ (մշակներուն) աղօթեն որ Աստուած հայթայթէ մշակները: Եթէ մենք ՉԱՂՕԹԵՆՔ հոգեւոր մշակներ պիտի չունենանք: □





## In Memoriam: Robert Hekemian, Sr.

***With the passing of Robert Hekemian Sr., AMAA has lost a friend, a supporter and a leader whose influence and philanthropy over the years, together with his contemporaries, has shaped the identity of the Armenian Missionary Association of America. A multitude of Armenian youth, unknown to Robert Sr. and his life partner, Mary Jane Hekemian, have enjoyed the blessings of the couple's God reflected love through Mr. Hekemian's years of service as Vice President and Board member and MJ's long standing leadership as National Co-Chair of AMAA's Orphan and Child Care Committee. The legacy of the Hekemian Family in the mission of AMAA continues to perpetuate through the established Hekemian Endowment Funds at AMAA and the decades long services of Robert Hekemian Jr. as AMAA's Scholarship Committee Chairman.***

Robert Hekemian, Sr. of Upper Saddle River, NJ, former AMAA Board member and Vice President, passed away on December 15, 2019. He was 88. Robert was born on June 3, 1931 in Hasbrouck Heights, NJ. He attended the University of Vermont and upon graduation in 1953 began working at Hekemian & Co., Inc. in Hackensack, NJ. Robert's passion for the real estate business fueled a highly successful career at Hekemian & Co. spanning sixty-seven years. Robert always viewed his work as an opportunity to do what he loved surrounded by people he truly valued. Robert took tremendous pleasure in helping people from all walks of life, whether through work or charity, and he celebrated their successes. He had a rare ability to make everyone who knew him feel special. He was an avid collector of American art, enjoyed gardening, and enjoyed traveling to Europe, Eurasia, South America, and the Middle East with his family. He loved going to his church, The Church of The Risen King.



Robert dutifully served on many boards including The First Real Estate Investment Trust of NJ (where he served as Chairman and CEO), The Commercial Trust Company, UJB Financial, Summit Bank, Pascack Community Bank, Hackensack University Medical Center, Boy Scouts of America, The Armenian Missionary Association of America, Bergen Community College Foundation, and Saddle River Day School.

A main drive in Robert's life was his deep-rooted commitment to philanthropy. He strongly believed in the need to give back to his community. Among the numerous causes near and dear to Robert's heart were Hackensack University Medical Center, his church, the New York Philharmonic, and international mission work. In 2011 Robert was awarded the Ellis Island Medallion of Honor for his many humble and great acts of philanthropy. This Medal, awarded to individuals who have made it their mission to "share with those less fortunate, their wealth of knowledge, indomitable courage, boundless compassion, unique talents and selfless generosity," epitomizes the type of life that Robert lived, one in service to God, family, and community.

Robert Hekemian leaves behind his loving wife of sixty-three years, Mary Jane Hekemian, his children, Robert Jr., Lisa Hekemian-Mongelli (Bart), Bryan (Suzanne), David (Andrea), and nine grandchildren: Christopher, Robert, Daniel, Emma, Molly, Bryan, Luke, Payton and Olivia. Robert also leaves behind his sisters Ann Krikorian (passed away on February 6, 2020 - see obit on page 37) and Marilyn Voskian along with many friends and relatives.

Funeral services were held on December 20, at West Side Presbyterian Church of Ridgewood, NJ followed by the Committal Service at Hackensack Cemetery in Hackensack, NJ. The family has requested that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to the Church Robert loved dearly, The Church of the Risen King or to Hackensack University Medical Center, Hackensack, NJ.

May God bless the memory of Robert Sr. and may the Holy Spirit console the Hekemian family. □

## Edwin Adamian

Edwin Adamian of Wellesley, MA passed away peacefully at his home on January 10, 2020. He was 91.

Edwin was the son of the late Jacob and Pariz (Fereshetian) Adamian. Edwin grew up in Arlington, MA where he resided for 84 years and attended Arlington High School and Boston University. He served in the United States Air National Guard during the Korean War.

Edwin was devoted to his family and to his country, and will be remembered for his very gentle, kind and loving manner and his charming smile. He will be greatly missed by his wife of 54 years Hermine (Chekijian) Adamian, his daughter Susan Covo and her husband Peter of Wellesley and his beloved granddaughters Ruth and Martha. He also leaves behind his brother-in-law, Yervant Chekijian of Watertown, MA, cherished niece Sharon Chekijian and her husband Gevorg Yaghjian of New Haven, CT, and nephews Donald Adamian of Arlington, MA and John Adamian of Wethersfield, CT. Edwin was predeceased by his siblings John Adamian, Ara Adamian (MIA WWII) and Arsham Adamian (KIA WWII).

Funeral services were held on January 18 at the Armenian Memorial Church of Watertown, MA, followed by burial at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery, Arlington. Donations in Edwin's memory may be made to the Armenian Missionary Association of America Orphan and Child Care Fund. □



## Epiphanes Kevork Balian

Epiphanes Kevork Balian, M.D., 81, died after a brief illness at the Maine Veterans' Home on November 16, 2019.

Born in Beirut, Lebanon on December 5, 1937, he was the sixth child of Bali and Veronica Donabedian Balian. He graduated from the American University of Beirut in 1960, emigrated to the United States in 1961, and graduated from Boston University with an M.D. in 1966.

From 1966 to 1970 he was an intern, resident and fellow at Rhode Island Hospital, Boston State Hospital, Children's



Hospital, and Brigham Hospital. He was a Vietnam Veteran of the U.S. Air Force, serving for 9 years and attaining the rank of Major at Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery, AL.

In 1972 he started a psychiatric practice on Hogan Road in Bangor, Maine. He later attended the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, as well as Loyola University where he graduated with a J.D. in 1987. He expanded his practice to include criminal and civil forensic psychiatry, and retired in 2016.

Epi's interests included horses, gun and stamp collecting, reading, Bible study, classical music, and movies. He was devoted to his family and his Armenian heritage, and anonymously donated time and money to needy people.

Epi is survived by his sisters Sion Hagopian of Deerfield Beach, FL, Pishon Schulz of Allentown, NJ, Gihon Sears of Deerfield Beach, FL, Saronne Balian of Florence, OR, and many nieces and nephews.

He was laid to rest in the family plot at Masis Ararat Armenian Cemetery in Fresno, CA on December 12, 2019. Donations may be made to the Bali and Veronica Balian Memorial Fund at the AMAA. □

## Flora Barsoumian

Flora Barsoumian of Van Nuys, CA passed away on January 7, 2020 at the age of 70.

Flora was born on November 22, 1949 in Beirut, Lebanon to Hagop and Rozin Kallaydjian and was the youngest of five children. She spent her early years at the Jebeil Orphanage in Lebanon and later continued her education at the St. Hagop Armenian Apostolic Church School in Ashrafieh, which was later called the Chatalbashian School. Although Flora loved living in Beirut, because of the civil war that erupted in Lebanon in the mid-70s she moved to the United States, first moving to Fresno, CA then to Washington, D.C. to join her cousins who lived there. Flora loved working for a travel agency during these years, which afforded her some freedom and independence and the ability to travel.

Through mutual friends, she was introduced to an eligible bachelor named Vahe



Barsoumian who lived in Los Angeles. It was love at first sight and the two married on August 2, 1981. They soon welcomed their first child, a son Shant, and a year later welcomed their second child, a daughter Taleen.

Flora loved raising her two children and taking care of her family. In addition to being a mother and homemaker, she worked diligently alongside her husband Vahe helping him run their dry-cleaning business for many years. Flora was an amazing cook and loved to entertain in her home where she made the favorite dish of any guest in hopes of putting a smile on their face. She was always there to lend a helping hand to whoever was in need and took care of those around her. She had a huge heart and gave of herself tirelessly without expecting anything in return.

This last year was particularly difficult for Flora, after losing her beloved husband Vahe to a long battle with cancer. Although she was blessed with many family members and friends to be with her and care for her, the loss of her life partner was still a heavy toll. Her greatest joy was in her grandson, Jacob, who she loved to cook for and make all his favorite foods. It put the biggest smile on her face when he would call and ask for specific foods by name.

Funeral services were held on January 17 at Forest Lawn Cemetery in Hollywood Hills, CA. Flora is survived by her son, Rev. Shant Barsoumian, daughter, Taleen Sherbetjian, son-in-law Movses Sherbetjian, grandson Jacob Sherbetjian, her two remaining brothers Azad and Koko and sister Marie and their families. □

## Dr. Alex Bezjian

Dr. Alex A. Bezjian of Fort Lauderdale, FL passed away from amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), also known as Lou Gehrig's disease, on December 31, 2019 after being diagnosed 12 months ago.

Born on November 2, 1941 in Beirut, Lebanon, he attended the American University of Beirut (AUB) and subsequently completed a Medical School Internship at the AUB Hospital. Upon graduation, he left Beirut for an OB/GYN residency at the University of Miami (UM). He joined the faculty at UM as an academician and was





of the pioneers in developing the diagnostic science of OB/GYN ultrasound in the early 1970s. He advanced the technology through research, and he performed sonograms on women with the most complicated obstetrical cases in South Florida in the 1970s and early 1980s. At the time, he became the youngest tenured professor at the UM Medical School. In 1986, he went into private practice, specializing in OB/GYN ultrasound and prenatal genetic diagnosis with amniocentesis. He had offices in Boca Raton, Fort Lauderdale, Miami Lakes and South Miami. During his career, he gave countless lectures around the world and authored many journal publications in addition to writing two textbook chapters. He was a member of the national OB/GYN Ultrasound Society and was President of the Miami OB/GYN Society in 1988. He retired from practice in 2000.

Dr. Bezjian's favorite hobbies were tennis and thoroughbred horse racing. When he was young, he was a member of the Lebanese tennis team, and represented Lebanon against many Middle Eastern countries including Egypt, Syria, Turkey, Kuwait and Greece. He was also an avid horse owner and won multiple races throughout the United States.

He is survived by his lovely wife Marianne, his son Alex Jr. (Britta), his daughter Marisa, and grandson Alex III. They are all extremely proud of him and miss him very much. Funeral services were held at First Presbyterian Church of Fort Lauderdale, FL on January 9. Memorial contributions may be made to the the Phil Smith Neuroscience Institute at Holy Cross Hospital ([www.holycrossdonations.com/](http://www.holycrossdonations.com/)), or to the Armenian Missionary Association of America ([amaa.org/memorial-donations/](http://amaa.org/memorial-donations/)), a charity Dr. Bezjian himself contributed to frequently, in support of child education and welfare in Armenia and Lebanon. □

## Edward Kassouny

Edward Kassouny, a resident of Glendale, CA and formerly of Beirut, Lebanon, passed away peacefully on December 11, 2019 at the age of 80.

Edward was born in Aleppo, Syria to Manaseh and Mabel Kassouny who were



originally from Aintab, Turkey. He moved to Beirut, Lebanon at a young age to pursue his plumbing career, where he met his wife and had three children. In 1983, the family immigrated and settled in the Los Angeles area. Edward started and operated a successful plumbing business until his retirement in 2012.

He was an active churchgoer for many years at United Armenian Congregational Church, until Alzheimer's disease slowed him down and brought him to his decline. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

He is survived by his beloved wife of nearly 52 years Arax (nee Sabounjian). Cherished father to Hourri Palouljian and her husband Raffi, Raffi Kassouny and his wife Anahit, and Vicken Kassouny and his wife Rumina. Adored grandfather to Sophie and Sabine Palouljian, Viviana Kassouny and Aren Kassouny. Dear brother to Veronica Tashjian, Loutfi Kassouny (deceased) and Sarkis (deceased).

Funeral services were held on December 19 at the Forest Lawn, Hollywood Hills Cemetery officiated by Rev. Dr. Vartkes Kassouni.

The family requests donations be made in his memory to the Armenian Missionary Association of America. □

## Kachadour Kojoian

Kachadour "Camp" Kojoian of Cranston, RI passed away unexpectedly on November 29, 2019. He was 89.

Camp was the son of the late Harry and Nazalie (Bedigian) Kojoian and the brother of the late Dr. Gabriel Kojoian and Michael Kojoian. For 64 years, Camp was the devoted husband of Marilyn (Thovmasian) Kojoian.

Camp and his wife were dedicated volunteers of the AMAA's Armenian Children's Milk Fund Program throughout the 1990s and early 2000s. During the Korean War, Camp proudly served his country as a member of the United States Navy aboard the troop transport USS Marquette. Following his service, Camp took a job at The Providence Journal and remained in its employ for 46 years; starting out in the cafeteria and ultimately working as a printing pressman. Camp sincerely enjoyed



spending time with family and welcomed all who dropped by. As a committed father, uncle and grandpa he made a point to attend every little league game and recital he could. Among his other interests were American political history, photography and working in his yard. His passing is a loss to so many.

Camp is survived by his wife Marilyn, son Kevin, daughter-in-law Elena Kojoian and their children Michaiiah and Abigail, daughter Desiree, son-in-law Don Manley and their daughter Jesenia, sisters-in-law Leona (Thovmasian) Bailey and husband Wayne, Naomi (Thovmasian) Marsh and husband Nim, and Vanouhi Kojoian.

Funeral services were held on December 2 at Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Apostolic Church followed by burial with military honors at Swan Point Cemetery in Providence. Donations may be made to AMAA's Armenian Children's Milk Fund Program or Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Apostolic Church of Providence. □

## Ann Krikorian

Ann Krikorian of Wyckoff, NJ, passed away peacefully on February 6, 2020 surrounded by her family. She was 83.



Ann was born on June 15, 1936 to the late Samuel and Elizabeth Hekemian. Along with her brothers Samuel and Robert and her identical twin sister Marilyn, the family lived in Hasbrouck Heights, NJ. Ann graduated from Hasbrouck Heights High School and went on to earn her associates degree at Lasell Junior College in Newton, MA.

She met the love of her life, Serge Krikorian, in Asbury Park, NJ and they were married in October 1963. Ann worked as a bookkeeper at Hekemian & Co. in Hackensack, NJ before raising a family. Ann and Serge settled in Wyckoff, NJ in 1970, where they raised four children, Elizabeth, Gregory, Aimee and Douglas.

Ann was a loving wife, mother and grandmother. She loved spending time with her family, whether it be by the pool in Wyckoff or at her summer home in Curtis Point at the Jersey Shore. Her time at the beach inspired her love for lighthouses of all kinds. She loved the Yankees and the Rangers. And just knowing that she was bringing her homemade yalanchi (stuffed

grape leaves) made holiday gatherings an event that no one would miss.

Ann loved her church deeply. A lifelong member of the Armenian Presbyterian Church in Paramus, NJ, she served a variety of roles, including Elder and Trustee. She served on the Women's Guild as both President and Treasurer, helping organize various events for the congregation and the community at large. Ann was also a lifelong member of the AMAA serving on its Scholarship Committee for many years. She was a kind and caring person who always found ways to give back to those less fortunate.

Her greatest love was reserved for her family. She was predeceased by her husband Serge, in 2018, after 54 years of marriage. She was a devoted mother to Elizabeth Aynilian and her husband Nicholas of Ridgewood, NJ, Gregory Krikorian and his wife Tamara of Short Hills, NJ, Aimee Kientopp and her husband Bob of Wyckoff, NJ, and Douglas Krikorian and his wife Yana of Mahwah, NJ. Grandmother to 10 beautiful grandchildren: Nicholas Jr., Stephanie, Thomas, Paige, Caroline, Brandon, Sophia, Kayla, Kyle and Damian. She was predeceased by brothers Samuel in 2018 and Robert in 2019. Ann is survived by her loving sister Marilyn Voskian. She was an aunt and great friend to many, and her love and compassion will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

The funeral service was held on February 14 at the Armenian Presbyterian Church of Paramus, NJ, followed by interment at Hackensack Cemetery in Hackensack, NJ. Memorial donations were designated to the Armenian Presbyterian Church of Paramus. □

## Viken Manougian

Victor (Viken) Manougian, a resident of York, ME, passed away on December 22, 2019 at the age of 59.

Born on October 4, 1960 in Beirut, Lebanon, Viken was predeceased by his sister Ani Haiganoush Manougian, his father Nerses Manougian, and his mother Marie Bezirgianian Manougian.

Viken graduated from Paramus High School, Paramus NJ in 1978. He received his B.S. in Economics and Finance, magna cum laude, from Fairleigh Dickinson University, Hackensack, NJ, and his J.D. from New England School of Law. He had an over 27-year legal career spanning the states of ME,



MA and NH in areas including real estate, municipal law, bankruptcy, and foreclosure. During his high school and college years in NJ, Viken helped the AMAA office staff with their bulk mailings and other clerical works.

Viken was committed to serving the various communities he was a part of, including but not limited to as Assistant Town Counsel to Chelmsford, MA, and tireless commitment as a Trustee and Chair of the Board of Trustees. He was Councilmember at First Armenian Church in Belmont, MA, where he also provided legal counsel, took initiative in maintaining church building and grounds, and was always ready to lend a helping hand whenever called upon. He was a loving father who was very proud of his sons. They especially enjoyed various activities together, including skiing, attending Army football games, visiting amusement parks, train museums, classic car shows, antiquing, and whatever adventure lay ahead. He will be remembered by family, friends, co-workers, and neighbors for his warm and fun-loving personality, infectious smile, and sense of humor. "He could talk to a tree if it could talk back to him."

Viken is survived by his two sons Peter Manougian and his wife Kristina, and CPT Michael Manougian and his wife Katie. He is also survived by his brother Dr. Ara Manougian and his wife Dr. Toni Manougian, sister Sosy Maral Manougian Shishmanian, three nieces, three nephews and many cousins.

A celebration of life was held December 26 at First Armenian Church of Belmont, MA. Donations may be made in Viken's name to Officers' Christian Fellowship, First Armenian Church of Belmont, MA or the Armenian Presbyterian Church of Paramus, NJ. □

## Charles Shagoury

Charles A. "Chuck" Shagoury, of Winchester, MA, formerly of Dorchester and Milton, passed away on October 1, 2019. He was 84 years old.

Born and raised in Boston, Charles entered the U.S. Air Force at the age of 18 and served honorably for 8 years. He went on to become a member of the West Roxbury Masonic Lodge and was a lifelong member



of the Church of St. John of Damascus, serving on the Church Executive Board. Charles was one of the earliest volunteers of the AMAA's Milk Fund Program.

Despite his 35-year battle with Multiple Sclerosis, Charles had a successful business career and admirable work ethic. He was especially proud of his own business, Casco Printing, which he operated for many years. Through everything, Charles maintained his love for life and wonderful sense of humor. He was a proud U.S. Air Force Veteran.

He was the dear and devoted husband of Judy Talanian Shagoury, son of the late George and Mary (Matook), brother of John Shagoury and his wife Diane, and the late Alice Sabbag and her late husband Essa and uncle of Jay and Michael Shagoury and Lynne and Lewis Sabbag. He is also survived by many cousins and friends.

Funeral services were held on October 5 at the Church of St. John of Damascus in Dedham, MA. Charles was laid to rest, with military honors, at Wildwood Cemetery in Winchester. □

*Jesus said... "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?" John 11:25-26*

The AMAA Board of Directors and staff wish to extend their heartfelt condolences to the families of the following deceased friends.

\* **Anahid Aintablian Apkarian**  
Toronto, ON, Canada

\* **Maida Artinian**  
Rochester, NY

**John Berberian**  
Beverly Hills, CA

\* **John Boyajian**  
Easton, MA

\* **Diran Dohanian**  
Belmont, MA

**Peter Kalousdian**  
Westwood, NJ

**Hovig Kurkjian**  
Chevy Chase, MD

**Mark Markarian**  
Boston, MA

\* **Alice Yaldezian**  
North Ridge, CA

\* *Memorials designated for AMAA*



# Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian Publishes His 43<sup>rd</sup> Book

## *Heartfelt Reflections/Srdazegh Khogoomner*

By Mihran Jizmejian, President/CEO of Armenian Missionary Association of Canada

*Heartfelt Reflections/Srdazégh Khogoomné* (hard cover, 160 pages) is the 43<sup>rd</sup> book authored by Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian and published by the Armenian Heritage Committee.

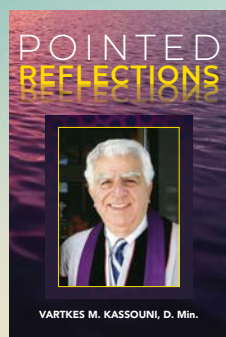
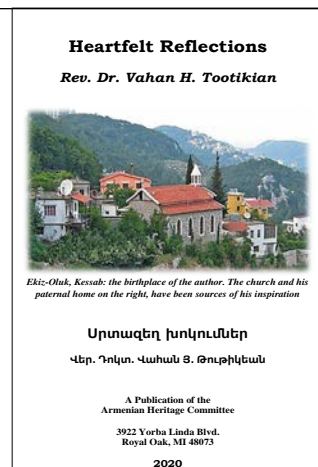
My friendship with Rev. Dr. Tootikian goes back more than 60 years during our seminary days at the Near East School of Theology, when I could see in him the future Armenian Evangelical leader, the intellectual and the communicator. Looking back retrospectively today, I can definitely say that my first impressions were true. Through God's grace he is today a dedicated pastor, a well-known ecclesiastical leader, a scholar and a prolific writer. Creatively, spiritually and intellectually uplifting ministry has been a hallmark of Rev. Dr. Tootikian's tenure as minister, educator and community leader.

This volume is an anthology of 28 English and 16 Armenian sermons, essays, meditations and articles that deal with religious, patriotic, educational and cultural themes. The book consists of 160 pages that are divided into three parts:

1. **Religious, national and cultural holidays.** This part deals with Christian and Armenian holidays that are reminders of our background as testimonies of our Christian faith and cultural heritage.
2. **Views on issues** are some lucid, compact and insightful sermons and articles exploring timely issues of faith, family, education, Christian and ethnic values, which are universal in their appeal and touch the hearts and souls of people.
3. **Personal reminiscences** about religious and community leaders who have made their transition from this world to eternity. In this section, the author, with deep pastoral sensitivity, remembers and writes about some cherished individuals who have gone but are not forgotten. wisdom and clarity.

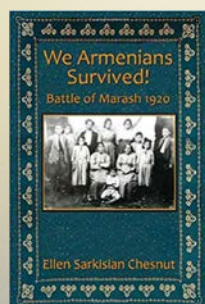
This book not only demonstrates Rev. Dr. Tootikian's remarkably broad interests, but also serves to present his insightful coverage on a number of issues with

**Book Cover caption:** *The photo on the cover of the book, Ekiz-Oluk, Kessab: the birthplace of the author. The church and his paternal home on the right, have been sources of his inspiration.*



## A NEW BOOK BY REV. DR. VARTKES KASSOUNI

Beginning in 1955, when he was the Student Assistant Minister in the Armenian Presbyterian Church, West New York, NJ (currently in Paramus, NJ), and ending in 2007, as Pastor of Morningside Presbyterian Church, Fullerton, CA, Rev. Dr. Kassouni has written hundreds of articles for churches he has served. They contain inspirational, educational, theological, social and motivational thoughts for the reader's growth in faith and life. They are included in a book titled **POINTED REFLECTIONS**. It is available at the AMAA Headquarters in Paramus, NJ. A full review of the book will be forthcoming. **Item 383 - Price: Donation plus shipping and handling. All donations will benefit Syria Relief Fund.**



## "WE ARMENIANS SURVIVED" BY ELLEN SARKISIAN CHESNUT

**We Armenians Survived! The Battle of Marash, 1920** is an unbelievable story of luck and the life affirming instincts of Armenians, including the author's family, who not only survived this devastating battle but grew to find more strength, after being enmeshed in one of the more brutal genocidal events within the larger period of the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1923 in Turkey. Their personal stories, lives, and denouements are a heartening tribute to acknowledging world history and human wrongs. The book is available at AMAA Headquarters in Paramus, NJ. **Item 384CO - Price: \$14.95**

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# BIBLE ENGAGEMENT: The Discovery of Faith, Hope and Self

## *A Publication of the Bible Society in the Gulf, 2019*

By **Rev. Dr. Vartkes Kassouni**

Dr. Hrayr Jebejian (D Min, New York Theological Seminary) is the author of this amazing and gripping book. In his capacity as the General Secretary of the Bible Society in the Gulf for almost 30 years, Dr. Jebejian has done a fascinating and pace-setting research in a part of the world (United Arab Emirates) about which we've know very little, and assumed not worthy of our concentrated attention because it is almost totally dominated by Arab/Muslim governments.

The first three chapters (eight in all) I find very helpful and necessary to understand this project. It provides the historic perspective and context for the place of Christianity in this region. I find it fascinating that the Nestorian Church had a significant presence there since the 4th century A.D. Muslim conquerors did not threaten them in the early years, but their threat came mostly from within Christendom, after Nestorius was branded a heretic by the Ecumenical Council (Ephesus, 431 A.D.) and banished. Here is a good example of how "heresies" do not vanish when banished but relocate and flourish somewhere else. For example, it was so with the first "heretic" Arius who went north into the Balkans after the Council of Nicea (325 A.D.) and brought Christianity there. The decline of Christianity in the Gulf is traced to the 9th century, mostly due to the dominance of Byzantine theology/dogma (Trinitarian) in the West, and unwillingness or inability to understand and accept it in the East by Muslims and Eastern Christians living there. With the arrival of the Portuguese in 1506, Western European Christianity was introduced in the Gulf region, followed by missionaries. However, violence and indiscriminate killings accompanied their arrival, leaving an indelible mark on the memories of the people, thus changing the image of Christianity from a pacific to a hostile one to this day. However, this negative image was somewhat mitigated by the positive, medical and educational work done by British and American missions following.

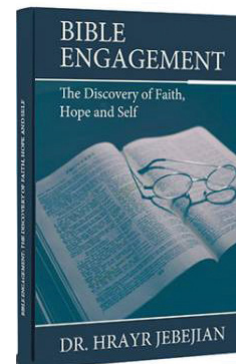
Today there are hundreds of Christian churches in the area. However, they are composed almost totally of migrant Asian workers (majority being from India). Millions of them have constituted the work force necessary to build the modern cities there. Dr. Jebejian was largely influential in bringing the Bible Society in the Gulf (BSG) to the UAE, and it has played a crucial role in bringing the Gospel to the immigrant people there, and also in bringing the churches of all denominations together in the common task of bringing to them spiritual enlightenment and support. It is in this regard that he embarked on the project, which forms the basis for this book.

The next two chapters deal with the essential core of this book. It is centered in the phrase BIBLE ENGAGEMENT (BE), and describes the process of affecting Christian change. This is done with the objective of "making the Bible discoverable, accessible and relevant," with the ultimate goal being that of helping these people regain their identity and personhood in community, centered in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I had not encountered this term before, having used the phrase "Bible study" always. I like BE much better because it takes one far beyond just the study of the Book to the experience of acting out and living out the truths found therein. In this regard, the research brought Dr. Jebejian face to face with hundreds of people using a three-pronged approach: The Printed Word, Audiovisual Tools and the Storytelling Tools. Limiting his research to those speaking Telugu (South India), he developed a project using three sets of questions in an interview process, including church leaders as one target group, and individual migrants as a second group. Using relevant scripture texts and verses he asked the migrants a series of questions, first, relative to the meaning, of the scriptures, next on how they engaged the scriptures in applying them to their own needs and struggles, and third with how they were nurtured by the scriptures. He then interviewed church leaders relative to their experiences with their people, requesting them to share their stories, and seeking from them ways the Bible Society could be of help to them in designing programs especially for migrants.

The final three chapters are fascinating in that they share the stories and experiences of the interviewees: stories of struggles, faith journeys, and testimonies of lives changed under the impact of the life-changing power of the Holy Spirit. They are moving and a powerful witness to the effective work the Bible Society has been carrying on in the region over these many years.

In his concluding remarks, Dr. Jebejian seeks to summarize his findings and pass on their implications for future use by the Bible Society and related parties. "No matter how differently the interviewees understood and made meaning of the same text," he says, "we can see that their lives have been transformed...and the message of hope has made an enormous impact on their lives." Addressing the Bible Society, he says, "The vast amount of data this research collected urges the BSG to consider some new directions for the BSG to improve, update, and modify its programs." Right on!

Through this book, Dr. Jebejian has opened for us windows and doors to look and see with new eyes and hearts what God is doing in the Gulf, and with that new awareness to be participants in the grand mission of Christ to the world beyond our immediate selves. □





## BOOKS

**ACADEMIES FOR ANATOLIA**, by Frank A. Stone, *A Study of the Rationale, Program, and Impact of the Educational Institutions Sponsored by the American Board in Turkey, 1830-2005*. 400 pp, #325 .....\$39.99

**THE ARMENIAN ANSWER TO THE ARMENIAN QUESTION**, by Richard Melikian, *This book is not about the past. It is about the future*. pb #CO355 .....\$12.00

**ARMENIAN CHRISTIANITY - THE FAITH OF A NATION**, by Rev. Dr. Aharon Sapsejian, *A historical look at Christianity in the Armenian culture*.pb #252 .....\$10.00

**ARMENIAN EVANGELICALS' CHALLENGE TO RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM**: by Dr. Arthur Salibian. *The Growing Influence of Fundamentalism in Armenian Evangelical Churches*. pb #361 .....\$8.00

**ARMENIAN EVANGELICAL MOVEMENT - HISTORY, FAITH AND MISSION**, by Rev. Barkev N. Darakjian, *The book consists of two parts: Armenian Evangelical Movement and General Articles*, 249 pp, pb #341 ..... \$15.00

**THE ARMENIAN EVANGELICAL WORLD COUNCIL**, by Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian, *A Bilingual Book, is the History of the Armenian Evangelical World Council from its inception in 1978 through the year 2014*. pp. 397, hc #CO356 ..... \$35.00

**BLESSINGS IN BITTER CUPS**, by Rev. Dr. Giragos Chopourian. *A triumphant story of a small clan of successful working class Armenians living in Turkey just prior to World War I*. hc #305 .....\$20.00

**A CENTURY OF ARMENIAN PROTESTANTISM (1846-1946)**, by Leon Arpee. *The history of the Armenian Evangelical movement from its beginning to 1946*. hc #365..... \$15.00

**CLAWS OF THE CRAB: GEORGIA AND ARMENIA IN CRISIS**, by Stephen Brook. 354 pp, hc #237 ..... \$25.00

**A HISTORY OF ARMENIAN CHRISTIANITY**, by Leon Arpee. *A fairly objective overview of the Christian pilgrimage of the Armenian people throughout the centuries*. hc #366 .....\$25.00

**I SHALL NOT DIE**, By Rev. Nerses Sarian. *The personal accounts of Rev. Sarian's survival story during the Armenian Genocide*. 156 pp., pb #347.....\$12.00

**IN OTHER WORDS**, by Rev. Dr. Peter Doghramji. *A variety of selected sermons*. pb #310 .....\$20.00

**THE MARTYRED ARMENIAN WRITERS 1915-1922: AN ANTHOLOGY**, by Herand M. Markarian. 250 pp, pb #362C.....\$20.00

**RECLAIMING KONIA**, by Heather Ruth Martin. *A tale of love, loss and the Armenian Genocide - based on the true story of Melkon Jenanyan*. pb #376CO .....\$14.99

**SHOWERS OF GRACE**, by Arousiag Tovmassian Missirlian. *A Memoir of God's abundant blessings throughout a lifetime of Christian service*. #346 .....\$20.00

**THE THIRSTY ENEMY - A MEMOIR**, by Dr. John Markarian. *It tells about the beginning steps in the creation of Haigazian College (now University), an institution of higher learning, and finds its theme in seven years of war, giving a drink to the thirsty Enemy*. 438 pp, pb #335 .....\$15.00

**THE TREATMENT OF ARMENIANS IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE 1915-1916**, By Viscount Bryce. *Documents presented to Viscount Grey of Fallodon Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs*. hc #14f.....\$23.00

**WHISPER OF THE ROOTS - ԱՐՄԱՏՈՆԵՐՈՒ ՄՐՄՈՆՉՔ**, by Rev. Vatche Ekmekjian. *A bilingual book (Armenian and English) presents the surviving Armenian Evangelical Sanctuaries and Build-*

*ings of Affiliated Educational Institutions in Historical Armenia and Cilicia with a photo gallery*. 134 pp, pb. #363CO.....\$20.00

**THE YOUTH HOME OF ISTANBUL**: by Hrant Guzelian. *A story of the Remnant's Homecoming*. pb #357 .....\$20.00

## ՀԱՅԵՐԷՆ ԳԻՐՔԵՐ

**Արթնցուր Ներսիսի Գտնուող Առաջնորդը - Հեղինակ՝ Միհրան Ծիզմեճեան - Առաջնորդ կամ ուսուցիչ պատրաստելու դասընթացը - #323.....\$10.00**

**Սիրոյ Օրէնքը - Տասնաբանեայ Պատուիրանները եւ Տէրու-նական Աղօթքը - Հեղինակ՝ Վեր. Նշան Պապաեան եւ Վեր. Դոկտ. Փիրըր Տողրամճի - #330.....\$5.00**

**Պոլսոյ Պատանեկան Տունը - Մնացորդացի Տուն Դարձի Պատմու-թիւն մը - Հեղինակ՝ Հրանդ Կիւզէեան - #329.....\$20.00**

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## ARMENIAN BIBLES - ԱՍՏՈՒԱԾԱԾՈՒՆՉԵՐ

**ARMENIAN REFERENCE BIBLE** - hc black - large - #502 ....\$25.00

pb white - large #503 .....\$20.00

Leather bound black - large #504.....\$30.00

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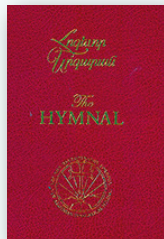
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Make checks payable to Armenian Missionary Association of America in U.S. dollars and mail to AMAA, 31 West Century Road, Paramus, NJ 07652. To purchase with a credit/debit card, please call the AMAA office at 201.265.2607 or visit our website [www.amaa.org](http://www.amaa.org)

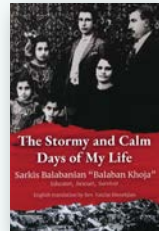
## AMAA Bookstore - Featured Books



**Armenian English Diglot  
New Testament**  
*Western Armenian and  
Today's English version.*  
Item # 508 - Price: \$15.00



**The Hymnal (Hokevor  
Yerkaran)**  
*Հոգևոր Երգարան*  
Bilingual Hymns  
Item # 353 - Price: \$30.00



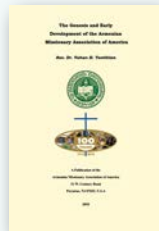
**The Stormy and Calm Days of  
My Life**  
*Educator, Rescuer, Survivor.*  
**Sarkis Balabanian (Balaban  
Khoja)** Translated by Rev. Vatche  
Ekmekjian  
Item # 406 - Price: \$20.00  
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Balabanian Ed. Fund



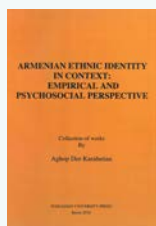
**A Century of Armenian  
Protestantism 1846-1946**  
(Second Printing)  
*The author recounts the  
history of the Armenian  
Evangelical movement  
from its beginning to 1946.*  
**By Leon Arpee**  
Item # 365 - Price: \$15.00



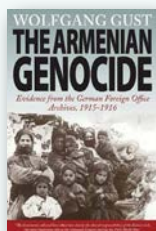
**A History of Armenian  
Christianity (Second  
Printing)**  
*A fairly objective overview  
of the Christian pilgrimage  
of the Armenian people  
throughout the centuries.*  
**By Leon Arpee**  
Item # 366 - Price: \$25.00



**The Genesis and Early  
Development of the  
Armenian Missionary  
Association of America**  
*History of the founding of the  
AMAA.*  
Item # 403 - Price: \$20.00



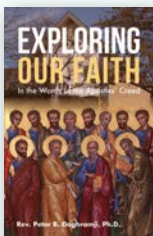
**Armenian Ethnic Identity  
in Context: Empirical and  
Psychosocial Perspective**  
*Collections of Works*  
**By Aghop Der-Karabetian**  
Item # 404CO-HU  
Price: \$20.00  
All proceeds will go to  
Haigazian University.



**The Armenian Genocide**  
*Evidence from the German  
Foreign Office Archives,  
1915-1916.*  
**Compiled and edited by  
Wolfgang Gust**  
Item # 349 - Price: \$75.00



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*An Armenian Cookbook in  
a Dialect of its Own.*  
**by Alberta, Anna and  
Louisa Magzanian**  
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*In the Words of the  
Apostles' Creed*  
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Istanbul: A Story of the  
Remnants' Homecoming.**  
**By Hrant Guzelian**  
Item # 357 - Price: \$20.00



**History of the Armenian  
Evangelical Churches of  
North and South America**  
*History of AEUNA churches,  
their founders, locations,  
pastors, leaders, and programs.*  
**Published by AEUNA**  
Item # 401CO - Price: \$10.00

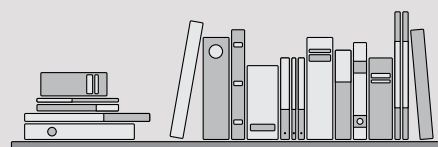
## Շնորհակալութեամբ Ստացանք Received With Thanks

The AMAA acknowledges with gratitude receipt of the following new publications

**POINTED REFLECTIONS** By Rev. Dr. Vartkes Kassouni

**WE ARMENIANS SURVIVED** By Ellen Sarkissian Chesnut

**ՄՏՈՐՈՒՄՆԵՐ ԵՒ ՄՈՐՄՈՋՆԵՐ** - Դեպի Կիլիկիա եւ Արեւմտահայաստան Ուխտագնացութեան մը Ընթացքին (23 Սեպտ. - 5 Հոկտ., 2013) - Հեղինակ՝ Վեր. Եսայի Սարմազեան







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# Save the Date

**AMAA Tour to Armenia and Artsakh**  
Celebrating AMAA's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
in Artsakh

**Depart September 8 – Return September 22, 2020**

For more info call AMAA at 201.265.2607





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**Yettem Church Congregation (1949) ■ Khachigian family members are identified as follows: Ken Khachigian age 5, front center. John Khachigian, last row left. Just below him is Rev. Samuel Rejebian. Oldest brother Melvin Khachigian is next to the woman with the black rimmed hat, who is below and to the left of John Khachigian. Elizabeth Khachigian is second from left, second row, (just above the woman with a handbag) in a white jacket. Ronald Khachigian is at the top right corner. Luther Khachigian (youth with white wide collar) in third row second from left. Photo courtesy of Ken Khachigian**